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# *Etiquette in Business*

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by **MARIE L. CARNEY**

*Illustrated by* **VIDA CARNEY**

**FIRST EDITION**

**THE GREGG PUBLISHING COMPANY**  
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## ETIQUETTE IN BUSINESS

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## P R E F A C E

Etiquette is an important essential in the conduct of modern business. It wins friends and influences customers. And within the business organization it promotes pleasant and productive working relationships among employees.

Etiquette in business and etiquette in social life are similar in many ways. Thoughtfulness, good nature, and regard for the interests and rights of others are fundamental in both business and social life. However, business life presents a great many situations that have no counterpart in social life, such as looking for a job, dealing with customers, writing business letters, selling, discussing salary with the employer, and hiring and training employees.

Business situations and problems that are of particular interest to the new employee are presented and discussed in Parts 1 and 2 of this book. The material in Parts 3 and 4 is more advanced in character, treating topics that a person is likely to face as an experienced employee or when working in an executive capacity. This arrangement should prove useful in schools and in company training programs where it is desirable to divide the course into two parts. Part 5, the concluding section of the book, is devoted to social life in business and is designed primarily for reference. For this reason topics for classroom discussion are not included. The detailed index is a special feature of the book.

*Etiquette in Business* is based on the author's eighteen years of experience as a secretary, teacher, and personnel supervisor. The information and guidance that it contains should help the reader avoid unfortunate mistakes in his personal relationships and wasted effort in his job perform-

ance. *Etiquette in Business* is, in fact, a book that shows people how to get along in business and how to do their work efficiently.

MARIE L. CARNEY

BROOKLINE, MASS.

*September, 1948*

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## **Part 1**

### **Business Etiquette for Beginners**







## **1. HOW THE NEW EMPLOYEE SHOULD ACT**

When you start to work you will find that along with the new duties there will be many new problems of behavior. You will wonder whether you have said the right thing, whether you are overfriendly or too reserved, how you can stand up for your rights in a pleasant way.

The business world is not like the classroom, where everyone learns the same things at the same time. The new employee has to learn alone.

### **ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS**

The way you feel toward others will determine how hard or how easy you will find it to get along with them. When

you like them you will have consideration for their feelings, and it will be natural for you to be tactful in your dealings. Your appreciation of their efficiency and knowledge will encourage you to learn and improve in your work, out of a genuine desire to be like them. When you are charitable toward their shortcomings, you not only show a fine attitude but you make it easier for yourself in working with them every day.

With the right attitude toward people as your foundation, you will find it easy to solve the specific problems of etiquette in business.

**Greetings.** When you come in each day, you say, “Good morning” pleasantly, looking around to those who work near you. There is no need to speak to everyone in a group individually or to disturb people with a greeting if they are already engrossed in their work.

In leaving, at the end of the day, if there is a convenient opportunity, say, “Good night,” but without making it sound important. On Friday night or at Saturday noon, people who work together generally wish one another a pleasant week end. Particularly if someone has spoken of going away, it is a friendly gesture for the others to say they hope he will have a good time.

**First names.** During the day it is well to maintain a businesslike attitude, but not at the expense of friendliness. It is generally considered preferable for employees to address one another as “Mr. —” and “Miss —,” but if you are with a small group among whom first names are already used, you will find it easier to fall in with this informality. Perhaps the girls will call one another by their first names, and the men will do the same among themselves, but when one of the girls speaks to one of the men she will say, “Mr. Smith,” while the men will call the girls and the women Miss Smith

or Mrs. Smith. Sometimes the older men and women will call one another by their first names, as they have done since their early days in the firm, while the younger crowd will confine first names to those of their own age group.

In a few days a newcomer will be able to find out what is the prevailing custom and will follow suit. It is better not to be too quick to adopt the use of first names, as you might make some mistakes and be considered forward when you had no such intention. Just be sure not to continue saying "Mr." and "Miss" when you are the only one who does so. In the presence of visitors, it is almost always better not to use first names when talking with coworkers, as this may convey the impression of an inefficient atmosphere.

**When invited to lunch.** When you first start to work, you may be invited to join others for lunch. Such association will give you a chance to become better acquainted than if you saw one another only at work. If you like their company and they like yours, you may be one of their group every day.

Sometimes, however, a newcomer is invited to lunch the first day by two of the older employees who want to be polite, but who intend to keep their twosome a closed corporation. If this is the case, you will no doubt sense it and can bow out gracefully by having errands to do on the second or the third day. When you do go out for the first time in the company of others, it would be a good idea to ask them for the locations of eating places near by. They will no doubt be glad to tell you about quality and prices, and thereafter you won't feel timid about going out to eat by yourself. When business companions lunch together in pairs or in groups, the occasion is always a "Dutch treat," with each one paying his own check.

When a rest room is provided by the firm, many of the employees bring their lunches from home. You may not

have brought anything the first day, as you would not likely have known that there were accommodations. If some of your new associates ask you to join them and you find that they have their lunches with them, tell them that you have not brought anything and that you will have to go out. You may add, "I'll bring a lunch tomorrow, though," and it will be understood that you intend to join them the next day. They may be so friendly as to offer to share their food with you. If there is no place in the vicinity where you can go for lunch, you will be forced to accept their hospitality. However, if there is any opportunity to get food near by, it will be better to go out rather than to deprive them of part of their lunch. When you are eating together every day, it will be as it was in school, with sharing and swapping around a bit, particularly when someone has a new kind of cake or cookies, so that everyone can have a taste.

If no one should ask you at first, that does not necessarily mean that you are not liked. Probably the others are not sure what time has been assigned for your lunch hour, or the office is so strictly supervised that there is no chance for conversation, or in a large firm the newcomer may not have been noticed. After a while you will become acquainted and will usually go out with the same friends each noon.

**Making friends.** You need not depend wholly on lunch time for making friends. When you pass someone in the corridor who glances your way pleasantly, smile. When your smile is returned, try to remember the person and be ready to smile again the next time you meet. Then if you both happen to be waiting for the elevator at the same time or walk into the building together, one of you will no doubt start a conversation quite naturally. In a small firm you will become acquainted fairly soon. The larger the firm, the less chance there is of meeting anyone except those who work near you,

unless you make a definite effort to join in the outside activities. You should always feel free to enter into such activities without danger of being considered forward, and you may find these contacts among your happiest.

You might inquire of someone sitting near you if there is a bowling team and, if so, ask for the name of the person in charge. The team may be complete, but if you put in your name, you may be asked to substitute when a regular member cannot be present. If you make a fairly good score, you will have a chance of being invited to join the team permanently as soon as there is an opening. It is the same with other recreation among the employees. A bridge team will welcome a good player, the glee club another singer, the softball team another player, Red Cross and sewing groups another worker. Simply give your name to the one in charge of a group and, if possible, have a little chat with him, so that he can find out how much you know about the activity you wish to join.

In some firms the employees give a minstrel show every year. Even though you have no talent for a specialty number, there is always a large "company" behind the black Sambos, as well as numerous committees that need help. You'll have plenty of fun at rehearsals and make more friends than you would be likely to meet in your routine contacts at work.

You probably will have to take the initiative in seeking friends. The others are likely to be too busy to urge you to join them and, besides, they may hesitate about suggesting something that might not appeal to you.

### ATTITUDE TOWARD THE JOB

**Business secrets.** Together with the importance of keeping business secrets is linked the necessity of keeping them without giving offense to others. In a resolve not to divulge in-

formation, an employee has sometimes made the mistake of answering questions with "I don't care to tell" or "I'm not at liberty to say." This will only incur the dislike of people who may not have meant any harm in asking, but who were just a bit curious.

That good old stand-by of an answer, "~~I don't know,~~" is always safe. People who have reached top positions have had to answer, "I don't know" so often that it is just part of the day's work. This answer can be made in a variety of ways that will avoid hurting any feelings or breaking friendships. The following suggestions are examples.

In response to a close friend: "Why, I don't know. They probably haven't decided yet."

With a group of friends: "Oh, you know me. I'm always the last one to hear anything that's going on in the place."

To an outsider who is waiting to see your boss and who tries to use the time in extracting a little information from you: "I'm afraid I don't know" or "~~I haven't heard.~~" Either response is to be given pleasantly, with no sign of annoyance.

To another executive who has asked you about your own boss's work when you are not certain whether it is all right to tell: "I'll ask Mr. Myboss, if you'd like." Generally the questioner will drop the matter by saying, "Oh, no, don't bother. It's not important. I just thought you might know something about it." In other cases, when he is not merely curious, he will probably say something like "Yes, will you ask him, so I'll know whether to go on with this report or not?" Sometimes he may ask your boss himself then and there, particularly if they see each other often and their work is interrelated. There is no need for you to feel that your boss will consider you slow for not having answered; he will recognize, from the nature of the question, that you were trying to safeguard his interests.

If you are holding a fairly responsible position and would naturally be expected to have the information, your answer might be given in some such way as these:

"Let's see if I have it here, Bill." Then, after fussing around with papers on top of your desk, opening and closing drawers, "Can't seem to find it anywhere."

"I think I must have let someone take my figures."

"I may have taken the stuff home, to work on it."

The newcomer may sometimes be in the unpleasant position of having to safeguard his employer's confidential work against the prying eyes of other members of the firm. Here are two examples:

Someone stands beside your desk and talks with you, simply to see the work you are doing. If it is confidential, you can cover it up tactfully, start to pick up papers and shuffle them around, as if you were looking for something. Then, while you have them in your hand, run through them again, and as if by chance pick up a blank sheet or one with unimportant scribbling; put them together with this extra sheet on top and lay them down. This sounds like sleight of hand, but it really can be done easily, and it is effective. After you have handled two or three inquisitive ones in this way, you will be quite at ease doing it while keeping up a pleasant chatter about the weather or how near five o'clock it is.

Those near you may have warned you that a certain person is likely to poke around, or you may have seen him do so. Then whenever he comes in your direction, look down at your work and appear completely absorbed in it. If he starts his usual pleasantries that lead up to questioning you or scanning your work, you can look up with a serious, absorbed air and exclaim, "Oh, good morning, Mr. Weknowyou," and then look down again, lost in deep concentration.

**The grapevine.** It is extremely impolite to go around gossiping and jumping to conclusions about others in the firm. No matter how much or how little foundation there may seem to be to a story, no one should take any part in spreading it. When a matter of importance has to be made public, it can be announced by the management in the form of a bulletin, if the group is large, or by a little talk, if the group is small enough to be brought together easily.

"The grapevine" is the name given to the method of conveying information without benefit of bulletins or announcements—generally without much foundation. The grapevine works as follows:

Mr. R. leaves the office at 3 o'clock to go to the dentist. Thinking of the pain in his tooth, he walks by the receptionist without saying where he's going.

The receptionist calls Tom, who shares Mr. R.'s office, and asks him when Mr. R. will be back, in case there should be any calls for him.

Tom says, "I was talking on the telephone when he went out, so he didn't leave a message with me."

This bothers Tom and he thinks about it until he remembers that Mr. R. went in to see the boss early in the afternoon with the sales plan. He remembers that Mr. R. came back with the plan in his hand, tossed it on his desk, jammed on his hat, and walked out.

Maybe Bill will know whether Mr. R. was turned down on the plan, so Tom goes into Bill's office. Bill doesn't know whether it went through or not, but is kind of doubtful, at that. "I was only in there with them for a little while. Someone was waiting to see me and I had to come out. Boy, and was I glad to get out, too. They were sure having a battle, the boss ya-ta-tat-ing about how expensive it would be, and R.'s no shrinking violet when it comes to pushing his pet projects."

Bill's stenographer decided that this would be a good time



to do a little visiting of her own, so she went to return the book she had borrowed from the treasurer's secretary. They had a nice chat while the treasurer was in with the boss. Bill's stenographer wondered whether that meant Mr. R. was getting fired after the awful fight he had had with the boss, just that afternoon. The treasurer's secretary wasn't sure, but there must be something cooking, because the treasurer had taken a lot of figures in with him—salary sheets and those charts showing how Mr. R.'s department was almost over its budget.

Bill's stenographer started back for her office but noticed that it was 4 o'clock and Fran the receptionist would be out in the washroom on relief, so maybe she could borrow a cigarette.

The two girls had a good smoke and an extremely nice chat. My, but that was news to Fran; still she was no slouch and she had thought something was up when Mr. R. walked right by without even speaking and looking so mad.

Bill's stenographer really had a good story by the time that she returned to her office, so by 5 o'clock everyone in the firm had heard that Mr. R. was fired or, as the more charitably disposed put it, he had quit.

That is, nearly everyone. The boss had not heard it, nor had the treasurer. They were still busy going over figures that would allow the company to adopt Mr. R.'s brilliant plan. A smart chap, thought the boss appreciatively, I mustn't forget to put a raise in there somewhere for R.

**If impressionable.** Through close association with other people you will change. It may be only from loafers to high heels. On the other hand, it may be from a state of painful shyness to a paradise of poise. Personal improvement is one of the by-products of having a job.

The great danger in copying others or being influenced by them is that you may unconsciously adopt some habits that are unattractive. Check yourself frequently, to see

whether the new ways that you have acquired are good or poor substitutes for the old.

Kathleen was placed in a small office with an older girl whose speech was jabbed with frequent and pungent swearing.

At first Kathleen was startled to hear so many offensive words, but after a while she began to feel quite worldly in using them, too.

A young fellow who worked in the firm's maintenance crew brought her up short, one day, by saying, "When you came in here we were glad to see a lady for a change, but now you make our ears blister."

At that, her own ears blistered. She stopped swearing, developed a violent distaste for the older girl's speech, and asked the manager if she might be transferred to another job. He tried Kathleen out for the next secretarial opening, she was kept on, and a year later she was promoted to a better secretarial job. Today Kathleen is making twice the salary of the other girl, whom nobody in the firm will try out.

Not only those who are just starting to work are likely to take on the mannerisms or habits of people with whom they spend so much time. We all do. We don't realize that we are talking in a strident voice like the girl at the next desk until someone at home tells us how noisy we've become. A young fellow is smart to try to learn as much about the business as old Hank knows, but he will go further if he copies only Hank's business methods, without imitating his slovenly appearance.

**Receiving instructions.** When you are shown how to do something new, make a careful note of it on your own list of such instructions. Go over this list frequently by yourself. Then you won't go plowing along repeating mistakes, particularly if the work involves a number of details or if you are expected to understand the preferences of several people.

With your list to refer to, you need not ask the same questions over and over, wearing out the patience of those who have already carefully instructed you. Instead of admitting inattention by asking, "What did you say yesterday? I've forgotten," you can build a reputation for responding quickly to instruction.

When you have made your list, keep it in your desk or close at hand. Do not take it home or even carry it around in your pockets or your handbag, for anything pertaining to work must not be taken away without permission.

**Supervision and correction.** Unless a new job is simple and without variation, you will make a few mistakes at first. As you learn your work, the probability of error will decrease; but no matter how long you may be working, you will sometimes make mistakes. Everyone does.

You may be part of a large group with a supervisor at the head. You may be in a department where everybody is your boss. You may work alone in a small office most of the day, with the manager coming in from time to time to transact the business that he has accumulated outside. We all have someone to check what we have done. It is, therefore, essential to learn to take criticism with good grace.

1. Listen attentively as the mistake is being explained.
2. Make a note of it if you are not sure about relying on your memory the next time.
3. When you do not understand fully why you were wrong, ask the person if he will please explain the matter again.
4. Whenever anyone has finished correcting you, always say "Thank you" pleasantly, and go about your work without further ado.

Sometimes through misunderstanding a newcomer will be blamed for a mistake that he did not make. If this should happen to you, explain as briefly as possible how little you

had to do with the matter. An intelligent employer will attempt to clear up a question at once, but if a discussion should continue, with others becoming involved, try very hard to keep calm and quiet. Remember, you will still be working with the same people an hour later, the next day, maybe for years, and a little self-justification will not outweigh having caused a strained relationship.

#### THE RULES, WRITTEN AND UNWRITTEN

**Attendance.** Promptness is not only one of the signs of courtesy, but it is one of the best ways of avoiding a call-down.

Many large firms are doing away with time clocks, leaving control of tardiness to department supervisors. In smaller places, a person coming in late couldn't be more conspicuous if he dropped in by parachute. There are no two ways about it—you will have to be on time. This means being on the job at opening time—at your desk, your switchboard, or wherever you work—not just dashing into the building.

There are reasons for lateness that are not questioned if they occur only occasionally.

**Transportation:** If your train pulls in late, if a tie-up on your bus line delays you, or if something happens to Dad's car when he drives you in.

**Illness:** In some cases it might be better if you stayed out the rest of the morning or even the whole day, until you surely felt well enough to go in.

**Weather:** Not the usual rough weather when the school whistle blows, but a real humdinger of a snowstorm that makes the going entirely too hard.

The same excuses, to a more pronounced degree, are acceptable for absence.

**Transportation:** If there is a strike and absolutely nothing is running.

*Illness*

**Weather:** If it cuts off all means of transportation.

When you are unable to go to work, or when you know that you will be really late, always telephone soon after the place will be opened. Ask for whoever is your immediate superior—the secretary whom you assist, the buyer, the inspector in the lab—and give the reason. (If you are ill enough to stay in bed, of course you will have someone else do the telephoning for you.) If the person you have called is busy elsewhere, leave a message with the one who answers or with the switchboard operator. Then your boss will be informed later and will not wonder why you have not appeared.

If you are ill for any length of time, keep the firm informed as to your progress and probable date of return. If your absence necessitates the hiring of a temporary employee, try to let the firm know a few days before the date when you expect to be back, so that your substitute can be given reasonable notice.

**Smoking.** In regard to smoking at work, rules made by the firm govern this habit, rather than individual preferences. When smoking is allowed, a smoker is always expected to use an ash tray. A cigarette is not to be laid on the edge of a piece of furniture or pressed out on the floor, and it should be unnecessary to say anything about the seriousness of tossing a lighted cigarette into a wastebasket or out a window.

**Sharing a locker.** Sharing a locker with someone is an intimate arrangement—one that calls for thoughtfulness and a thorough regard for the rights of others.

In sharing a locker, be sure not to take more than your share of the space. It would be unfair, for instance, to keep it filled with bags and boxes. Excess clothing should be taken

~~home, for you will be using your share of room if you have a coat, a hat, a sweater or a jacket for chilly days, an umbrella, and a mirror and whisk broom hanging inside the door.~~

~~Food should never be left in a locker overnight.~~ If you take a lunch from home, be sure that it is in a heavy paper bag, or wrapped in a kerchief, and place it on your side of the locker shelf until lunch time. None of the food should ever be put back again. Food odors cling to clothing, so if your lunch contains sandwiches with highly seasoned fillings, or fruit, use extra wrappings of waxed paper.

You should be assigned a locker and be given a key on the morning you start a new job. If the management is lax about this, don't hesitate to remind the person for whom you work. As soon as you are given the key, attach it to your key ring and start using it.

~~If your locker mate is careless about using a key, don't~~ worry and wait until something is stolen before speaking about it. You can say, "Do you want to use my key if you've forgotten yours?" or "I'd feel terrible if anyone stole my new coat. You'll keep this locked, won't you?"

You might be interested to know that, in large organizations, the men and women who have good positions and who wear high-priced coats never have to make a complaint about losing their things, because they automatically turn the keys in their lockers every time they leave them. But the personnel departments are bothered with frequent cases of missing jackets and coats among the newer boys and girls and the part-time school help. When these younger people are questioned, the answer is either that they lost the keys or that they never had used them at any time. It not only takes a lot of work at a beginner's salary to buy another coat, but distressing suspicions and enmities spring up over lost articles.

Thieving is not confined to sport coats and jackets. In one firm a girl's fur coat was taken the first week she had it. In a large firm occupying many floors, five winter coats were stolen in one morning. In each case the owner of the stolen coat admitted that she had not used her locker key. Unfortunately, none of the garments was ever recovered.

If you can get no cooperation in the matter of locker maintenance, it will be best to try to make a change. You may have formed a friendship with someone who has room for you, or there may be an empty locker available, or you may just have to think of a plausible excuse for making a change.

The excuses that you give, both to the person you are leaving and to the supervisor who issues the keys, might be expressed something like this:

"There is a spare locker on the next floor and it will be nearer my office."

"My coat is so bulky, I'm squashing all her things."

"I have a ride home with Joan and her father every night, and it would be more convenient if we kept our things in the same locker."

"We're good friends and go around together, and we'd like to be together if we possibly could."

It would be better not to tell about the person who neglects to keep the locker locked. An astute supervisor will probably guess the reason, but will respect the person who doesn't tattle. If the supervisor raises any objection, grumbling about how much work you are causing, remain smiling and pleasant but keep up an appearance of hopeful expectation. If she actually refuses to make a change, you will finally have to tell her that you are extremely conscientious about locking up your coat and that you would feel easier if it were in another locker. Don't back out of making your request for a change. Be pleasant about it, but remember that you are

the owner of the clothes in question and that it is your right to have proper protection for them.

**Care of handbag.** A girl has the additional problem of taking care not only of her clothes but of her handbag, as well. Aside from the possibility of its being stolen, if you are careless about leaving it here, there, and everywhere, you will be sure sometimes to forget where you left it last and may think that it has been stolen. Before it has been found, the feeling of suspicion will cause needless discomfiture among your associates. Whenever someone leaves a handbag lying around, others wish that she would not, and frequently someone will speak up and remind the careless one to keep hold of it.

When you are working, keep your handbag inside your desk—not on top—or under your chair if you are seated at a switchboard, or under the counter if you deal with the public. When you go to the washroom or out to lunch, take it along. It should not be left with your coat and hat.

If you work alone in one office and have to go into your employer's office for dictation, there will be no one to keep watch on your desk during your absence. To safeguard your handbag, place it in either the left or the right top drawer. Then you can lock the drawer and no one can open another drawer over it and reach down. Slip the key between the leaves of a book or even take it with you, if that will make you feel more secure. If the other drawers are left slightly open, they won't lock, and you can use them freely during the day without disturbing your personal drawer, if your work calls you from the office frequently.

It is a good habit to lock up your handbag, even if another girl shares an open office with you. While you are out of the office, she might be called away from her work, too; then there would be no protection. Just be perfectly frank about



the fact that you keep your things locked up because of the possibility of strangers coming in; in fact that is probably the advice that you, as a newcomer, will receive from the other girl when you start working there.

If you are assigned an old desk and the key happens to have been lost, ask your employer to have a lock put on it. Be as pleasantly insistent as the girl in the large firm may have to be for a locker key. Until your desk is taken care of, do the best you can by tucking your handbag in the back of the drawer under papers and, of course, never leave the office for any length of time without it.

#### IN OFFICES OF VARIOUS SIZES

**One-girl office.** In this type of office, there is a familiarity that no one can escape. Just as manners in the large, regulated organization tend to be quite formal, the closeness of the association in the one- or two-office arrangement will foster an informal atmosphere.

Whether a girl is working for men or women, in such an office, she should not call them by their first names. She may be Mary to them, because of her youth, but they will like it better to have a distinction made.

The person for whom she works is her employer, not one of the crowd that she is used to running around with, saying anything that pops into her head. It is all right to tell the kids at the skating rink that they're positively gruesome, for this is some of the jive talk that they give out, too; but in working hours and business surroundings, it won't do.

The business girl's appearance, as well as her speech, is of definite importance. She is meeting everyone who comes in and, as representative of a business, she needs to look the part. Bobby socks and "sloppy Joes" are out. So are bitten fingernails. It's more fun, anyway, to adopt pretty hairdos

and smooth Junior outfits, now that there is a public to admire them.

**Fairly small office.** There may be four or five rooms or a large area, with one private office for the head of the firm. However the group is divided between men and women, you will be thrown into daily association with at least several people. Consequently, you will have more occasions for being cooperative here than are likely to occur in the one-girl office.

Sometimes a girl will ask you to exchange lunch hours with her, when she has a special date. Sometimes you will be asked to bring back a sandwich for the accountant, who has to finish his trial balance by 3 o'clock. The boss's secretary will ask you to address envelopes for her correspondence when she is rushed. If you are a man, the friend who sits next to you may ask you to fill in for him on his bowling team, the night that his youngster is ill.

In a small office, it would be most unfair for anyone to stay out longer than the time allotted for his lunch, if that would keep someone else waiting for a chance to go out until his return. If you are the one who goes early, and something important comes up that will require you to take more time than usual, ask the boss if you may go earlier, or make sure that it will be agreeable for the person who alternates with you if you return late.

A fairly small office can afford all the makings of a delightful working and social life. Several years ago, my job took me on temporary assignments to some branch offices. In each place it was the same. The work came piling in every day and everyone went right at it. There wasn't much time for fooling, but just the same we had a lot of laughs, and I can't remember when time went more quickly. Everyone was friendly outside the office, as well as inside. There were no twosomes, no cliques. In the few months I worked with them,

I went to more picnics and steak roasts and record hops than I had in a year at home.

**Larger offices.** The larger firm has more jobs and, generally, more chances for ~~the beginner to advance, but in it there are more people who are on the watch for the jobs and the chances to progress.~~ A man who says "Sir" to an elderly employer will have unquestionable advantage over the bright young chap who isn't bright enough to take his hands out of his pockets when he is being introduced.

Depending on the extent to which you hope to get ahead, you will need to impress favorably those within the firm, as well as that portion of the public you meet. Out of the many cases of young people who have been promoted because of the good impression that they made, only two stories will be told here as examples.

Fred had gone to war directly after graduating from high school, so he had no job to come back to when he was discharged from the service. Through the efforts of his high school principal, he was hired as stock boy by the finest office in the city. Fred was pleased to be able to get into the firm and went to work full of enthusiasm.

Now, a job as stock boy is not much of a job, even though it means taking care of the supplies in a fine office. The pay is low, the work is physically hard, and the demands are often very trying to one's disposition. It is the kind of job that many a fellow takes, only to quit before the week is over.

However, Fred moved the hundreds of boxes that had to be moved, climbed to the topmost shelves and bent over the lowest ones, promptly filled requests from different departments for supplies needed unexpectedly, and was patient when some of the employees came poking around the stock room and displaced things.

A few weeks after Fred had started working, the personnel manager was wondering where to find the right type of young

man to fill a new job that was being created for a receptionist. News of Fred's willingness and courteous manners had reached him, so two days later the personnel manager had the young man installed in his new job.

He did not remain there long, however, for the vice president was so impressed with Fred, as he passed him each day, that he offered him a chance to become a salesman. That is the type of work that Fred has always thought he would like, so now he is receiving excellent training for it in the company's sales class.

After graduation from college, Judy went to work as secretary to the program director of a large radio station. The details of her job required her to meet the public, as well as to have dealings with many of the people within the firm.

Judy's position was one of the most trying in the place, with the possibility of more things going wrong than right. Despite this, she kept her head and her temper, trying her best to get along with everybody, and succeeding amazingly well in doing so. Amazingly, because she was the first girl who hadn't given up the job within a month.

When there was an opening for a script editor, Judy asked to be tried out. Although her boss was on the point of hiring an able script editor from outside, he admired Judy's attitude so much that he decided to let her try.

Her headaches as secretary were nothing compared to those in store for her as script editor. However, she stuck it out and came up smiling.

The last I heard of Judy was that she had developed a radio skit of her own and was a featured star on the station.

**Where there are several thousand people.** ~~When great numbers of people work together, they will find that, unless they show the utmost courtesy toward one another, their days can be unbearable.~~

In a big organization, with floor after floor of office space, in order that not an inch may be wasted, desks are lined up

close together. For that reason, it is inconsiderate of the newcomer, who may be a little strained over his unaccustomed tasks, to hum or whistle at his work and disturb those near by. The girl who has a short supply of patience should not indulge in sighing and snapping her fingers when she makes a mistake over new work, for it may cause a half dozen people around her to make mistakes, too. Everyone is expected to work as quietly as possible, without adding unnecessarily to the noise from telephones, machines, and the unavoidable motions of a large number of people.

All through the day, you will be conscious of the nearness of others and of the need to show consideration for their rights—in crowded elevators, in the washroom, in the cafeteria, with the group around the candy machine. Shoving your way through will never help you to get anywhere in business.

Contrary to what might be expected, a newcomer's identity is not submerged in a large organization. He has every opportunity to impress those around him with his pleasant manners. As a part of its system, the very large firm keeps a well-organized record of each employee's behavior, appearance, attitude, disposition, tact, cooperativeness, and other traits that are noted by those responsible for him—his supervisor, the department head, and the personnel adviser. The impression that he makes is reflected in his pay increases and in opportunities for promotion to more interesting work.

Whatever the size of the office, if a person behaves acceptably, he can count upon results not only in advancement, but in the daily satisfaction of making relations between himself and others as agreeable as possible.

## FOR DISCUSSION

✓1. Why is the attitude of the new employee particularly important?

2. What should be the new employee's attitude toward

- a. His employer?
- b. His fellow employees?
- c. His work? *business*

3. When would you be expected to address others at work as "Mr." and "Miss"? When would the use of first names be preferable?

4. Name three ways in which you can become acquainted with others when you start to work, without being considered presuming. Can you think of other ways?

5. What is a business secret? Why should it be kept secret? What might happen if it were not?

6. What problem of etiquette enters into the keeping of business secrets? How would you handle this problem under the following circumstances?

- a. You are with a group of friends at lunch and one of them questions you.
- b. You are a receptionist. While a visitor is waiting to see someone in your firm, he tries to secure some information by questioning you.
- c. While you are occupied at your desk with confidential work, someone from another department in your firm makes a pretense of stopping to chat with you in order to see what you are doing.

7. What can be the result when news is spread through the "grapevine"?

8. How can you make it easier for both yourself and your employer when you are assigned a new task?

9. If you make a mistake in your work, what four points would you observe in order to show that you know how to take

criticism in the right spirit? If you are blamed unjustly, what should you do?

10. What consideration does a business firm expect from its employees in the matter of attendance? Explain fully.

11. What cooperation are you expected to show toward your locker mate?

12. Ways have been suggested for making conditions pleasant for one another in offices of various sizes. Can you make additional suggestions?

13. Can you think of specific ways of cooperating with other employees if you were working

- a.* As salesperson in a large department store?
- b.* In a small grocery store?
- c.* In a beauty shop?
- d.* At the reception desk in a clinic?
- e.* In the copywriting department of an advertising agency?

14. Talk with friends who are employed, and learn what is done in their firms to create good will between

- a.* The management and the employees.
- b.* The management and the public.
- c.* The management and other firms.



## 2. "I WANT TO LOOK RIGHT"

There is no quicker way to show a knowledge of the fitness of things than by an attractive appearance. Grace and fine qualities will be evident on longer association, but in business the brief encounter is often the only one.

### TO THE WOMEN

**Clothes for business wear.** At school and college the careless look was the thing. Clothes were casual, shoes were not things of beauty, and it would have been unthinkable to go around without a kerchief stuffed in your raincoat pocket.

But once you have started to work, you will find that things are different, and for several reasons. Men and women with



salary checks have more money to spend on their clothes than has the student with an allowance. As people become older, their tastes in dress tend to be more conservative, and in business you will be among people of all ages. Perhaps most important of all, the seriousness of conducting business affairs causes people to dress with rather exacting taste.

Suitability. To be considered correctly dressed, you will need to buy your clothes from the standpoint of suitability.

When you are shopping for clothes, avoid the dress with fringe that would swish and catch in the furniture; the wrap-around skirt that has to be yanked into place; long, wide-cuffed sleeves that are always getting into everything; low-cut necklines, and skirts slit deep. Keep in mind that you have to work and that you want to work with ease.

If suits look well on you, they will be an excellent investment. However, be sure that the suit you buy fits perfectly across the shoulders. It would be unsound to buy one requiring such drastic alterations that the original lines would be spoiled; but minor adjustments, such as nipping in the jacket at the waistline, lengthening the sleeves, or hemming the skirt, are often necessary. After a week's salary has been spent on a suit, it would be false economy to try to save three or four dollars by omitting the alterations that will make all the difference between a trim appearance and a dowdy one.

For a becoming effect and flattery ~~to the~~ figure, the solid color and continuing lines of a dress ~~are~~ found to be more attractive than a blouse and skirt, with the suit jacket removed. (By the strictest rules, a woman's jacket is kept on indoors, the same as a man's; but this is frequently uncomfortable for the file clerk, the librarian, and others who must move around considerably in the course of their work.)

Slip-on sweaters and cotton jerseys are not so suitable as blouses, but they can look right if reasonably long and cut

full. The trouble is, so many jokes have been made about them that a firm dealing with a high type of client doesn't want to be represented by "sweater girls." Although a girl may be working in a department away from the public eye, if she is careless in dress she may be passed by when there is an opening in another part of the firm where appearances count.

During the last few years most girls have gone hatless in good weather, but it is still preferable to wear a hat and gloves when making a business call in a big city. At least three national concerns have a rule that their women representatives must not go hatless when calling on firms, and among some personnel interviewers the applicant without a hat is not rated as high on appearance as she would be if she wore one. For everyday travel back and forth to a job a girl generally decides for herself whether she should wear a hat.

On those midsummer days when it seems as if one more ounce of clothing would be unbearable, it is a temptation to wear our coolest clothes. However, some that are sold for sportswear are not meant to be worn at work. Sometimes an employer has had to ask a girl not to wear certain styles again, so it may save someone possible embarrassment if they are mentioned here as objectionable. They are the backless dress, the two-piece outfit open across the midriff, and the dress or blouse draped ~~on~~ the shoulders.

In many localities ~~all~~-white shoes or spectator shoes have a chance of remaining fresh throughout the day, but in crowded cities they are likely to suffer in the subway stampede. In New York and Boston, for instance, the girls who look extremely smart are those who wear dark accessories to work, the year round. Comfortable sandals are made of light-weight suede or kid, well cut out for coolness, and in black, navy, or shades of brown for smartness.

When you start going to work and notice how the girls around you are dressed, you will find that many of them are style conscious but not type and color conscious. They see something in an advertisement or a store window and think, ‘‘O-o-o-h, that’s for me,’’ without any question as to whether or not it is suited to them individually. The vogue of the season is not always universally becoming.

As a help in a self-analysis of your needs, turn to the newspapers and the magazines that print articles on the right clothes for girls of varying types. For instance, while a tall girl can successfully wear large hats, carry enormous handbags, and wear wide belts, the small girl should avoid these and choose, in preference, more dainty accessories. A stout girl will add pounds to her appearance by wearing two-piece dresses and bright colors, while she can subtract from her apparent weight by choosing fairly small hats and simple footwear. There are suggestions of all sorts of devices to help the older girl look deceptively young. Such informative articles are written usually by people who make clothes a life-time study, and their advice is, as a rule, sound and timely.

*Color.* For some jobs, dark clothes or a uniform may be required, and this automatically settles the color problem. In cases where there are no restrictions, you will need to give thought to looking smart when on the job.

Dark clothes are practical because they reduce cleaning bills, and because everything matches, which is a help when you’re in a hurry to dress in the morning. However, if you’re in one color from head to foot, you will probably get tired of always looking the same. So choose one basic color, like black, brown, gray, or navy, and build your wardrobe around that, but add other colors in a variety of ways.

If you’re wearing a dark suit, brighten it up with a vivid

scarf or dickie, or with a blouse in color, rather than in the classic white.

If your winter coat is black, you may like to alternate your black shoes and handbag with accessories in green alligator or with suede or calf in some popular shade.

Is gray your basic color? With a simple wool dress wear a contrasting yellow belt; or choose a belt in the same gray, embroidered in bright wools or studded with fake stones. When spring comes, you can go from gray into navy, for example, with ease; the navy accessories will harmonize with your gray topcoat and, later on, work into summer outfits.

If the main color in your wardrobe is brown, vary it with a winter wool in beige or coral, with a summer shantung in turquoise. The next time you buy accessories, you may prefer one of the beige or tan tones. This will provide a change from dark brown and yet harmonize with it.

The greatest expense involved in adopting colors for your costume comes when you change your wardrobe completely from one basic color to another; for there are usually a few wearable items in the old color left over. However, if you should decide to build your wardrobe along more becoming color lines, you will find that the most practical way to do it is to make use of the neutral tones, such as beige, natural, gold, and some shades of gray; or of such colors as green and certain shades of blue.

If you are changing from black to brown, for instance, and you need a new coat, don't buy a brown coat, because that will go with none of your good black clothes that are left. Instead, buy a coat in beige, gold, or green. Not only can you start wearing it at once, but it will serve equally well when your black accessories have been replaced by new ones in brown.

Care. To ensure a good appearance there is no more valuable aid than a handy ironing board. Even a beauty can't look beautiful in a dress as wrinkled as a prune. Some materials need to be refreshed frequently; but if woolen garments are kept well brushed, less pressing will be necessary to restore them to shape. Dresses and coats of all fabrics will look better and last longer if they are kept on hangers whenever they are not being worn. Skirts, too, should always be hung up, with clips holding them firmly to wide hangers.

Nothing else is so attractive in the spring as white touches when they are kept white; but unless blouses and neckwear are taundered after each wearing, their dainty effect is lost. It is the same with white gloves. If a white hat—or one with light trimming—is not handled carefully, it will soon lose its freshness.

When you buy something new, it must be looked over carefully. Maybe an uneven hemline needs to be straightened, or the buttons and snaps sewn more tightly. There may be loose threads to be knotted and trimmed. A belt an inch too long might make a girl look 2 inches wider at the waist than she really is.

Felt hats and suede accessories need to be brushed every time they are worn, because their nap catches dust so quickly. Suede that is bruised requires only a few strokes with fine sandpaper or a small wire brush.

If you have taken care of riding boots, you have learned how leather pumps can be rubbed to that same sleek look. And everyone knows what a quick job the repair shop can do on run-down heels. Whether you have this work done during lunch hour or after five, it should not be neglected.

Keeping watch of the details of good grooming may seem to take up much time, but experience will prove how automatic such attention soon becomes; for instance, the quick

glance at your hemline to be sure that your slip isn't showing. Keep a supply of clean dress shields ready. Stockings, underthings, and two handkerchiefs are fresh each morning. Your shoulders are free from powder and dandruff flecks. When a loose seam starts to rip you check it at once with needle and thread. You are careful in putting on stockings, knowing that a crooked seam can spoil the looks of even pretty legs. Girls who look smooth know that to have an extensive wardrobe isn't half so important as always to look immaculate.

**Cosmetics.** *Make-up.* It's a long time since grandpa's girl typist sprinkled rice powder on a piece of chamois and lightly touched her perspiring brow; but the natural look is still preferred, whether the source is nature itself or the cosmetic counter. An employer is not concerned as to how this look is achieved as long as the results are pleasing; that is, he doesn't care except when a girl uses her desk as a dressing table. It so annoys him to see her apply make-up in public that he tries to think of some task for her to do at once, so that she will have to stop.

Whether you are putting on make-up at home in the morning, or are renewing it in the washroom during the day, if you overlook several details, a lovely appearance may be marred.

For one thing, too much rouge will make a girl look older, hard, and cheap.

In putting on lipstick, you can do your best job when you use a lipstick brush or when the top of your lipstick is kept in a point by frequent wiping with a cleansing tissue. Unless lipstick is applied with care, the result will be a fuzzy outline, instead of one that's fine and even.

While lipstick is indispensable, mascara and eye shadow are considered out of place in the daytime. If the eyebrows

are so light as to require a pencil, a deft stroke can be developed with a little practice.

For a thoroughly pleasing effect, it is agreed that two fundamental facts must be remembered. The skin should be bright and clear. For some people this may mean an improved diet, exercise, and possibly treatment by a doctor. It is just as important that the teeth should be well cared for. Even though this may make it necessary to do without other things temporarily, the money spent for good dental work is one of the best investments possible.

*Perfume.* It has been found by tests that the sense of smell varies greatly in different people. What seems to one person to be a pleasant odor may be overpowering to others. Only the most delicate perfume should be used in business, and then only a drop or two. A saleswoman in a good store can suggest perfumes without so heavy a base as civet, musk, or ambergris.

Toilet water or cologne is preferred by most girls, who recognize a slight daubing of toilet water and the use of an effective deodorant as just the right complement to the daily bath.

*Nail polish.* The girls whose hands always look attractive put time aside regularly every week to give themselves a manicure. In most types of work there is no objection to the use of nail polish, as long as the polish is kept in good condition. When it becomes the least bit chipped, it is not the least bit glamorous. In a medical office and in jobs where it is impossible to keep the polish from getting chipped, the girls find it best to do without polish altogether.

*Hair.* Near the top of the list of mistakes—with bare toes and chipped nail polish—unkempt hair receives severe criticism from men. Their own short hair is so easy to take care

of that they notice quickly when others neglect to keep theirs as clean and well arranged.

Sometimes a girl is able to give herself a good shampoo at home, a thorough rinse so that her hair will be soft and gleaming, and then set it in a way to underscore her best features. If it is not easy for her to do this, she may be able to economize somewhere in order to go to the hairdresser's regularly.

Occasionally a girl will have her hair done during her lunch hour, with pin curls and flat waves left uncombed so that they can be "saved" for an evening date. She does not realize, apparently, that the people with whom she works may feel this to be a lack of consideration, as if they didn't count at all.

The girl who is admired for her lovely presence follows a program of constant personal care. Not just one, but many attractive qualities produce the complete effect. There is her immaculate cleanliness, starting right from the part in her hair. There is her fastidiousness in selecting colognes and a deodorant, for she knows how unforgiving those who are offended can be. There is the attention she gives to every detail, from the care needed twice a week to have smooth legs and armpits to the daily use of a mouthwash when there is the slightest feeling that it may be necessary.

**Jewelry.** There are times when a costume needs just the finishing touch that is given by the right piece of jewelry. It may be an unusual belt buckle, or twisted pearl strings around the neck. It may be a pin or a fob or a choker—whatever is smart and becoming. Too much jewelry is to be avoided for business wear, but when used with discretion it can provide the perfect accent.

When people voice an objection to jewelry worn during work hours, they are usually thinking of the following:



Huge rings covering the finger to the middle knuckle

Earrings so large that they cover the ear and make it difficult to hear over the telephone

Dangling ear drops

Loose bracelets that catch in a typewriter or a cash register

Ankle chains

Trick gadgets and jingly jewelry (These are considered “kid stuff.”)

**Glasses.** Anyone who suffers from eyestrain cannot help feeling cross and nervous before the day is over. Usually it is not confined to feeling, but is reflected in an impatient manner in dealing with people. If a girl's eyes require glasses, she need not be afraid that they will spoil her looks. She will probably get the surprise of her life to find that her girl friends will be wanting to get some, too. Frames are offered in so many interesting shapes and colors that eye specialists have a hard time convincing some people they have no need of glasses.

**Posture.** Despite the closest attention to clothes and their care, no one can look her best unless she has good posture. In business, especially, a poor bearing gives an appearance of laziness. When typing, a girl needs to sit erect, with both feet on the floor. They need not be close together, heel to heel, as long as they are flat on the floor and not crossed. Unless there is a panel across the front of her desk or enclosing her typewriter pedestal, a girl will need to be careful how she sits at all times.

**Habits.** There are other habits besides that of poor posture with which employers are quick to find fault in business.

Gum chewing is one, and another is eating while on the job. Store managers are very strict about this, for they know how it would turn customers away. In no type of business will it do any good.

An executive in a certain firm who needed a new secretary was asked by the personnel director to consider a capable girl who was working in the general office.

When the executive learned who the candidate was, he refused, saying, "Every time I pass her desk she's munching."

When rising from a chair, a girl may automatically make some awkward motion, like twitching her skirt or adjusting a shoulder strap.

In a poll conducted by a senior high school class among 200 business executives, one of the questions was, "Please state the habits you consider objectionable among women employees."

The three mentioned most frequently were girdle yanking, pulling at shoulder straps, and turning stocking seams around.

The way you dress and the way you act are a matter of habit. You can gain whatever picture of yourself you wish. At first you may feel that a few details need special watching, but after the initial effort it will become second nature to look right at all times.

#### TO THE MEN

**How to dress when you are looking for a job.** If you've been in high school or on a college campus during the last four years, you probably have a choice collection of sport jackets, but you may have a limited supply of the sort of clothes that one expects to see on a man in an office or in a store or calling on people as a salesman. When you are looking for a job it is important to show that you know the standards of dress expected of you in business; so before you start out, you will do well to put together an outfit that will make a good impression on interviewers.

Take inventory of the suit that you keep for church and special dates, preferably one with coat and pants of the same

material. Look it over carefully to see whether it needs to be pressed and whether there are any spots to be removed. Check to see whether repairs are necessary, such as sewing on loose buttons or catching the edge of a pocket that's starting to tear.

On the chance that you may be interviewed by men with very decided taste in dress, you will find that an all-white shirt will be your best choice. Try to have a good supply of these shirts, so that you'll still have some to wear while the others are being laundered. A shirt that was only slightly soiled has often disqualified a man for a job.

Not knowing how your interviewers' tastes will run, play safe and wear whatever good tie you have in subdued coloring or quiet design. Try to wear socks that are not too colorful, too, and see that they are held up so that they won't bunch around the ankles.

If your raincoat does double duty in good and bad weather, continue to wear it, but give it the same careful scrutiny that you gave your suit. Don't worry about getting a cloth coat until you have been working long enough to be able to afford it.

In the informality of school life you probably have seldom or never worn a hat. Nevertheless, it will be better to have one when you are calling on employers in a city of any size. If you can afford a good hat, it will be a profitable investment, because it will far outlast the cheaper felts. If your expenses are limited, just get the best hat that you can for the money, and when you're working buy another hat as soon as this one starts to look worn. In choosing a hat be very critical and don't get a style that isn't becoming. The brim that is the least bit too wide or too narrow, the crown that is not just suited to you can make an amazing difference. Above all, be sure that the size is right.

Look your shoes over to see whether they need new heels or new soles, and put in a pair of fresh laces. Then shine your shoes well and, thereafter, shine them often.

**Building a wardrobe.** When you have started to work every day, you will find it necessary to enlarge your initial outfit somewhat. You'll want a fair assortment of ties, to give variety to your appearance; and you should have enough socks so that you'll always have a fresh pair ready in the morning.

A new suit is no small item to buy; but when you can afford one, you'll have a feeling of being well dressed in having a change. Besides, two suits worn alternately are considered a practical investment, for fabric has a better chance to spring back into shape when it isn't subject to constant wear. Another big expense will be a topcoat, while in a northern climate you will probably need an overcoat, too, unless you spend most of your time in a car.

As to buying shoes, you probably know from experience how important it is to buy good ones. They hold their shape for lasting comfort, and they take a beautiful shine. Brown shoes can range in tone from medium to very dark, but they should never be the least bit yellowish. For summer wear in the big cities, you will find that black or brown shoes in lightweight leather are more practical than shoes with any white in them. In a small locality or at a resort, spectator shoes look suitable if you don't forget to clean them.

**Being well groomed.** The following interesting comment was contained in a letter that came recently from a fashion magazine editor: "We are told by people in commercial firms who prepare grooming pamphlets for distribution that 40 per cent of their requests for pamphlets come from boys."

This brought to mind a leaflet that was published a few years ago by the department of public health in one of our states. The sheet was distributed to thousands of school pupils to help them check the many items covering their

personal appearance. Various employers who happened to see the leaflet thought that it covered the subject of grooming so well that they included the material in publications that their own firms put out for the benefit of their employees.

The following chart includes questions that were in the original leaflet, as well as several other questions suggested by employers.

SELF-CHECK ON PERSONAL APPEARANCE

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<b>Hair:</b>		
Neatly combed? . . . . .	_____	_____
Clean? . . . . .	_____	_____
Cut or trimmed whenever needed? . . . . .	_____	_____
<b>Eyes:</b>		
Bright and clear? . . . . .	_____	_____
Free from squinting? . . . . .	_____	_____
<b>Face:</b>		
Freshly shaved? . . . . .	_____	_____
Free from blemishes of a remediable nature? . . . . .	_____	_____
Daily shower? . . . . .	_____	_____
<b>Smile showing</b>		
Clean teeth? . . . . .	_____	_____
Healthy gums? . . . . .	_____	_____
That the dentist is visited regularly? . . . . .	_____	_____
Hands clean? . . . . .	_____	_____
Nails trimmed and clean? . . . . .	_____	_____
Clothes brushed (no dust, hair or dandruff)? . . . . .	_____	_____
Neckties and hats free from spots? . . . . .	_____	_____
Handkerchiefs fresh daily? . . . . .	_____	_____
Shoes well polished? . . . . .	_____	_____

The average businessman can score 100 per cent on this test, so anyone with a mark under that will be quite sure to find himself unfavorably regarded in the stiff competition of the business world.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do clothes worn at work differ from those worn at school and college?

2. Which is more important, to pay attention to grooming details or to build up a wardrobe? Why?

3. What are two basic facts to remember in achieving a facial appearance that will be pleasing to others?

4. Is your posture good? If you feel that it could be improved, what do you plan to do?

5. How do others react to the appearance made by a man or a woman in business?

#### *Especially for women*

1. Name at least 10 points of good grooming for a girl to observe if she wants to make a good appearance.

2. In putting on make-up, what points are important? Can you remember other make-up hints that you may have read or been told?

3. Name at least five points of constant personal care that every attractive girl observes.

4. As directed by your instructor,

a. Look through discarded magazines and newspapers, and clip six illustrations of women who are dressed appropriately and attractively for business.

b. Make a composite picture by clipping separate items of wearing apparel and pasting them on a sheet of paper. This picture should show an outfit to wear in an office, a store, or wherever you will probably work. On another sheet paste pictures of outer clothing that would finish the outfit when you start from home in the morning.

5. Make a “Self-check on Personal Appearance” chart for yourself similar to the one for men at the end of the chapter. Then check yourself at home tonight. If you have to answer “No” to any of the questions, check yourself every night until you have brought your mark up to 100 per cent.

*Especially for men*

1. If you were going out tomorrow to be interviewed for a job as salesman, how would you dress? In making your list, use clothes that you already have and try to keep your imaginary purchases to a minimum. How do the colors harmonize?

2. Name several men in business life whom you consider to be well dressed, according to the pictures of them that you have seen.

3. What reasons prompt a man to be well groomed in business?

4. Check yourself at home tonight on the questionnaire at the end of this chapter. If you have to answer “No” to any of the questions, check yourself every night until you have brought your mark up to 100 per cent.



### 3. SPEECH

#### THE IMPRESSION YOU MAKE

Well-chosen clothes are an indication of good taste and a quiet, pleasant manner is evidence of refinement; but the minute you open your mouth to speak, you either reinforce the good impression made by your appearance or you spoil it completely.

The most attractive speech is that which comes easily, without fumbling or affectation. No one can possibly make a good impression on others when his vocabulary is so limited that he has to hesitate, grope for adjectives, and start a word and then stop when the pronunciation stumps him.

Quite as irritating to listen to is affected speech. The Southern drawl that a Northerner picks up on a 2-week vacation is at such variance with his general manner of speaking that it sounds ridiculous. The broad "a" that a graduate some-



times takes home from a Boston school along with his diploma sounds just as silly to the home folks as it did to the Bostonians he thought he was imitating. The pseudo-British accent affected by some, the high-C airs put on by others, the accent of foreign movie stars adopted by some young girls, all detract from the favorable impression that these people might otherwise make.

### BASIC REMINDERS

In school there are abundant facilities for cultivating good speech—English classes, textbooks, and the finest literature. Although a student is in the learning stage, he has the advantage of being in an environment that encourages him to speak well.

After graduation it's different. He is in daily association with people who have been out of school longer than he has, some of them for a very long time. Many, having become careless, don't speak half as correctly at forty as they did at twenty.

They may have let their vocabularies grow rusty from lack of use until they have become reduced practically to Basic English. Or they have fallen into the habit of sliding over syllables. When they say, "E's not comin in day. I speck im int morra," they really mean, "He's not coming in today. I expect him in tomorrow." Perhaps they have grown careless about grammar, so that their speech is now punctuated with "it don't" and "you was."

These lapses in speech are caused less often by inadequate education than by indifference. A person is used to working with the same people every day, referring to familiar subjects and speaking in a voice that his friends are accustomed to. Without realizing it, he becomes what is commonly called

“speech lazy.” In thinking only of conveying his thoughts, he loses sight of the intrinsic beauty of words.

Our good friends, the dictionary and a grammar book, should serve as constant references, but emphasis is placed here upon a few points of pronunciation, enunciation, and grammar that are most frequently overlooked.

**Pronunciation.** The most common form of carelessness is the omission of a syllable that should be sounded.

CORRECT	INCORRECT
ac-cu-rate	ac-rit
au-thor-i-ta-tive	au-thor-i-tive
con-sid-er-a-ble	con-sid-ra-ble
fam-i-ly	fam-ly
en-vi-ron-ment	en-vir-ment
gen-er-al-ly	gen-ral-ly
in-ci-den-tal-ly	in-ci-dent-ly
in-ter-est	in-trest
i-tin-er-a-ry	i-tin-er-y
lab-o-ra-to-ry	lab-a-to-ry
re-al-ly	ril-ly
sev-er-al	sev-ral
vet-er-an	vet-ran

The omission of one necessary letter is just as noticeable.

CORRECT	INCORRECT
ar-chi(ki)-tect	ar-chi(ki)-tec
con-tract	con-trac
Feb-ru-a-ry	Feb-u-a-ry
gov-ern-ment	gov-er-ment
i-den-ti-fy	i-den-i-fy
length	lenth
li-bra-ry	li-ba-ry
rec-og-nize	rec-a-nize
sec-re-ta-ry	sec-e-ta-ry
width	with

In other instances an extra letter is put in—one that does not belong.

CORRECT	INCORRECT
ath-let-ic	ath-a-let-ic
height (hīte)	hitth
o-ver-alls	o-ver-halls
pro-nun-ci-a-tion	pro-noun-ci-a-tion
some-thing	sump-thing
trans-late	trans-i-late
um-brel-la	um-ber-el-la, um-brul-la

Sometimes all parts of a word will be included correctly, but stress will be laid on the wrong syllable. The following business words have been taken at random from those most frequently heard with the accent in the wrong place.

## CORRECT

ad dress'	mu nic' i pal
a dult'	pref' er a ble
ap' pli ca ble	prom' is so ry
com' par a ble	ref' er a ble
dec' ade	(re fer' ri ble when
dis charge'	spelled that way,
fi nance'	but rarely used)
ir rep' a ra ble	rep' u ta ble
main' te nance	rev' o ca ble

As you have been reading these words, you may have thought of some others about which you do not feel quite sure. Jot them down, preferably in a notebook, so that you can add to your list continually. As you look up each word in the dictionary, study it carefully; say it over to yourself five times; compose a sentence using it; and try to say it within a day or two in conversation, even if you startle your family by it. The word should then be yours.

To supplement your list, you might take time to look up the following words, all of which have frequently proved bothersome to people in business.

annuity	deficit
appreciate	dispatch
appreciation	employee
assignee	envelope
assignor	fulfil
associate	gratis
association	machinery
auxiliary	negotiate
comptroller	permit (noun and verb)
consignee	precedence
consignor	precedent (noun and adjective)
controversial	realtor
coupon	survey (noun and verb)
data	ultimatum

However, it is the errors in pronouncing common, everyday words that make a person appear untaught.

*With* should be pronounced with a hard *th*, as in then.

*Have* has a *v* in it, not an *f*.

*Just* is pronounced just as it is spelled, not as jest.

*Because* is not becuz or coz.

*Get* is not git.

The *re* in *hundred* should not be incorrectly transposed to hunderd, the *ra* in *stenographer* to stenogarpher.

*Avenue*, *executive*, *during*, *figure*, and *New York* have a clear *u* sound, as in you, not *oo* as in moon.

In every line of business there are other familiar words that people sometimes get into the habit of mispronouncing.

In the music business, for instance, they will be careful to pronounce Chopin and Beethoven correctly; but it is no less important to say *vi-o-lin* with three syllables, not *vi-lin*, or to speak of an *ac-com-pa-ni-ment*, not an *ac-com-pa-ment*.

In the book business they would properly speak of *po-et-ry*, not *poi-try*; of a *bi-og-ra-phy*, not a *bi-og-er-phy*; of *lit-er-a-ture*, not *lit-ra-ture*.

A suite of rooms is on display in the furniture department: with *suite* pronounced sweet, not soot; *rooms* with the double *o* hard; and *furniture* pronounced with the *t* sounding slightly like *ch*—*fur-ni-chure*, but not *fur-ni-cha*.

People sell *jew-el-ry*, not *jool-ry* or *jool-ery*. Rings are set with *di-a-monds*, not *di-munds*.

A *law* office is not a *lor* office. *Attorney* is pronounced with the middle syllable sounding like *turn*. A case goes to the *ap-pel'ate* court. A client is known as *Smith a' lias* Slippery Sam.

When these simple words are pronounced correctly, a dual purpose is served. One result is clear, pleasing speech. At the same time, a person is automatically reminded to exercise care in pronouncing all his words.

**Enunciation.** Even though a person may pronounce his words correctly, poor enunciation will make it hard for others to catch what he is saying. Unless one is hampered with a speech defect that cannot be corrected, his listeners will feel that he has no excuse for making them ask, "What did you say?" and "I'm sorry I didn't hear you," and, "What was that again, please?" He is expected to speak distinctly in the first place.

Everyone should be careful always to enunciate proper names clearly. There are many occasions when this is important: in asking for people on the telephone, in greeting them at a reception counter or when they come into an office, in introducing them to one another.

It is just as important for anyone to give his own name clearly—when he announces himself over the telephone; when he introduces himself at a business gathering; when,

as a salesman or some other office caller, he is seeing someone for the first time.

In speaking into a dictating machine, it would be well for the dictators to show more consideration than they do toward the operators who have to transcribe the work. If those who use an apparatus of any kind would play back a recording once in a while, they might be surprised to find how much of their speech was almost unintelligible. Poor diction has to be listened to again and again until the meaning is clear, and this makes transcribing work harder on the girls than it should be. Women's voices, on the average, have been found to register on machines much less clearly than do men's voices. With this in mind, women might wisely make a special effort to speak very distinctly and in fairly low tones.

**Grammar.** A person need not be a grammarian in order to be able to express himself without making such errors as these: "Did you see that there sign?" "When are youse going to be through?" "We et in the new lunchroom today," "I seen him take it," and, "The meeting looks like as if it was going to last all morning."

Less serious, but frequently noticeable in business, is the use of superfluous words. In the following examples the words in italics are unnecessary and should be omitted.

cooperate *together*  
enclosed *herewith*  
attached *hereto*  
*same* identical  
near *to*

Worn-out expressions, called clichés, cannot be considered grammatically incorrect, but they are very tiresome to those who have to listen to them frequently.

PREFERRED EXPRESSION	CLICHÉ
the Board of Directors	the powers that be
also	and last but not least
it is evident	it goes without saying
generally	by and large
so many miles by plane, or train, or car	so many miles as the crow flies

Another type of expression might be called a useless interjection. It calls the listener to attention, but what astounding news follows? A person whose speech is effective never clutters up his sentences with these senseless words.

*Say*, has anyone seen my scissors?

*You see*, we haven't any left.

*I mean*, don't you think it's all right?

*So*, when do you think you'll be able to go?

*Listen*, there won't be any room.

*Look*, who borrowed the book?

*By the way*, is it still raining?

*Ya know*, they always send their bills on the fifteenth.

Other expressions that do more to retard than help a sentence along are hardly even words.

Do you suppose we could go, *huh*?

*Well-uh*, let's look at these first.

There are five members on the committee, *don cher know*.

*Er-uh*, if we paste this paper on the backing, and *uh* use a green border, and *uh . . .*"

With the necessity for clear expression in business speech recognized, it is important to observe the established rules of good usage. By following rules that have been worked out and tested over a long period of time, one can learn to ex-

press what he has to say in a way that will be plainly understood and effective.

### HOW TO SAY IT

Many of the situations that are met in business require tactful speech. You have to make requests, ask questions, and make denials. If you hold a position of authority you must tell people how to do things and you may need to correct their work.

Throughout this book examples of ways of saying things are presented in connection with the subjects discussed. In addition, here are given various remarks that have actually been made, with suggestions for rephrasing them more pleasingly.

#### **Examples of tactful speech**

*Poor:* "You'll have to give me a requisition for it."

*Preferred:* "If you'll give me a requisition, I can place the order."

*Poor:* "There aren't any more, so how can I get them?"

*Preferred:* "I'm sorry, but I've tried everywhere and I can't find any."

*Poor:* "I told you this morning to give me an order number."

*Preferred:* "Have you the order number now?"

*Poor:* "Now, listen, when can I have them?"

*Preferred:* "Do you know when I can have them?"

*Poor:* "I'm not supposed to do your work."

*Preferred:* "I'm afraid I won't be able to, I have so much work now."



*Poor:* "Leave the list here. Maybe I'll type it."

*Preferred:* "If you'll leave the list, I'll try to fit it in with my other work."

*Poor:* "We don't save things for our customers."

*Preferred:* "I'm sorry, but we have so little room, we're not able to save things for our customers."

*Poor:* "I didn't get your order, so how could I fill it?"

*Preferred:* "I don't know what could have happened, but I didn't get your order. I'm very sorry, but won't you give it to me now and I'll fill it."

It is generally preferable to make a request in the form of a question. A direct statement usually has too commanding a sound, which even the use of the word "please" does not entirely soften.

*Poor:* "If my phone rings while I'm in the other office, please answer it."

*Preferred:* "If my phone rings while I'm in the other office, will you please answer it?"

*Poor:* "Give this to Mr. Allen on your way out, please."

*Preferred:* "On your way out will you give this to Mr. Allen, please?"

In an attempt to sound pleasant, girls sometimes make the mistake of injecting endearing terms. "Elaine, honey, have you got the folder?" "Where is my pen, dear?" "That dress looks lovely on you, dear. You won't find another one in the city half as nice, dear." In business this sounds sticky.

**In personal conversation with associates in business.** In personal conversation, too, with coworkers, exercise tact and

avoid remarks like the following: "Oh! How are you? I dreamt of you last night. You died of heart trouble." "Oh, I thought that the older woman was your wife." "I recognized you by your hat."

You would not like to be known as the girl who never says the right thing. Such a girl might admire a new coat on a friend in the office, but add, "It's so attractive on a woman of your age." Or, in commenting on someone's new hairdo, she might express the opinion that thin hair wasn't so noticeable when brushed that way. Good sense and kind feelings should make anyone realize how such remarks hurt and how quickly they alienate people from the one who speaks so thoughtlessly.

**Making an apology.** You may inadvertently have moved things on someone's desk or have bumped against him in pushing your chair back suddenly. When you have done anything that disturbs a person, say, "I beg your pardon."

In cases of slight awkwardness, "Excuse me" or "I'm sorry" are considered in better form. Either of these expressions may be used when you have to pass between two people who are talking together, or when someone is standing in front of a file drawer that you need to open; but remember, "I'm sorry" is not to be clipped to "Sorry."

**Variations of "Yes" and "No."** You would seem lacking in graciousness, as well as in originality, if your answers were always pared to the barest monosyllables. Even "Yes, Mr. Smith" and "No, Mr. Smith," though polite, can become irritating through repetition. In a variety of ways you can combine a pleasant manner with evidence of a willingness to help. A few answers are given here, while others will suggest themselves to you in connection with different situations.

Yes	{	Certainly.
		Surely.
		I'll be glad to.
		That's right.
		Yes, indeed.
		I have it right here.
No	{	I'm afraid not.
		No, nothing came.
		Thank you, but I have a pen.
		I'm sorry, but we have none.

"O.K." is so widely used in business that it has attained a considerable degree of acceptance, but there are still many people who dislike the expression. "Swell" is another slang word that has pushed up into the vocabularies of many who are not careless about their speech. However, others in the business world dislike the word and prefer to hear "excellent," "very good," or equivalent expressions.

Answers that are definitely unacceptable are "allrighty," "sure," "uh-huh," "okeydoke," "yuh," "nope," "naw."

**The use of "Sir."** *By a woman.* In the general course of business, a woman is not expected to address a man as "Sir" when she can address him by name. However, when talking with a stranger over the telephone, at an information desk, or over a store counter, she will find that it sounds more courteous to say, "Yes, Sir" and "No, Sir" than to clip her answers to a brief "Yes" or "No."

*By a man.* A man uses the term as a mark of respect when he is talking with another man, even when he knows the name. A student or recent graduate, for example, would never fail to say "Sir" to a man interviewing him for a job.

A young employee makes a good impression when he addresses older men in the firm as "Sir," even when there is

no difference between the jobs that they hold, respectively. When age is not a factor, men say "Sir" when they speak to someone holding a markedly higher position than their own in the same firm, or when they have occasion to talk with some man of prominence.

After a man has acquired the habit of using "Sir" on these occasions, he instinctively recognizes every occasion in which the use of the term would be appropriate.

#### THAT GOLDEN SILENCE

Just as a vivid color is brought out more effectively when it is contrasted with a quiet one, so is your speech made more interesting when it is relieved by silence. Tones that have started out as pleasing don't go droning on into monotony. Clear diction is listened to attentively when it doesn't have to be heard hour after hour. Humor is appreciated and descriptions are relished when they are heard for the first—not the hundredth—time.

Silence becomes really profitable when it gives customers a chance to speak, to tell you what they think of your product or how they feel about your business proposition. From what they say, you'll know the questions in their minds and the problems that they are considering and, as a result, you will be able to slant your sales talk to the best advantage. Be canny, as well as courteous.

A few months ago a large manufacturing company conducted a two-part survey among its customers. It was for the purpose of determining (1) 10 qualities that the customers considered most important in salesmen and (2) 10 that they considered most objectionable.

In the first group of answers, "the ability to make brief, concise sales talks" rated close second place, with "knowledge

of his merchandise and house policies" rating first. "Fluent speech" trailed along in last place, with fewer than six votes out of 347 replies.

In the group of objectionable qualities, "overlong sales talks" nearly tied for first place with "overaggressiveness." Tied for fourth place (with "inability to see 'my' side") was "slow, halting, confused manner of speech."

It is not only in selling that a rest in the conversation is welcome. The office chatterbox should give the boss a chance to get a word in edgewise to stop him before he does a job all wrong. The boss should realize that, by holding his secretary's attention while he talks on and on about trivialities, he makes it hard for her to get his letters typed in the time that is left. In fact, a member of any group should feel it important not to distract others from their work.

Speech can be silver, the brighter the better, but silence is golden.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Name five persons whom you know personally whose speech you find thoroughly pleasing, and explain why.

✓2. Name five persons heard frequently over the radio whose speech you find thoroughly pleasing, and explain why.

3. Name five actors or actresses whose speech—when they are not playing character parts—you find thoroughly pleasing, and explain why.

✓4. Add five words to each of the first three lists in this chapter.

5. How many words can you add in a week to the fourth list? How many words can you add in a month?

6. Can you pronounce correctly all the words in the fifth list?

7. Give the correct pronunciation of each of the following words by reading them aloud:

because	have	strength
clothes	idea	suggest
company	inquiry	traveling
during	interest	usually
employee	just	valuable
executive	law	what
exit	library	when
federal	probably	where
generally	quantity	whether
get	room	why
going	secretary	with

8. How would you rephrase the following remarks?

- a. "Have I got to wait all day?"
- b. "You're not the only customer."
- c. "Look, I'm doing it as fast as I can."
- d. "How do you expect me to find your coat if you can't find your ticket for it?"
- e. "I can't help it. I didn't set the price."
- f. "All that service? Say, we're not in business for our health."

9. What apology would you make if

- a. You should inadvertently put a package on someone's desk and cover up material that he has been working on?
- b. You had to squeeze through a narrow space between two people in an elevator?
- c. You wish to go into a room, but someone is standing with his back to you, blocking your entrance.

10. If you have a part-time or a full-time job, tell how you have exercised patience and tact in handling situations that came up at work.

11. Choose a line of business in which you are interested and make a list of frequently used words that one should be careful about pronouncing.

12. For the next few days take note of situations that you observe between others. Have they proceeded pleasantly or could they have been improved on?

13. Choose an item of about 100 words from a book or a newspaper. Stand at the front of the classroom and hold a sheet of paper in front of your face as you read your item to the class. Did you speak distinctly enough for everyone to understand you without seeing your lips moving? If you are not in school, make the test at home while a member of the family listens to you from across the room.

14. If you have a phonograph or the use of one, plan programs consisting of recordings of good speech. (You will find that about every type of literature has been recorded by speakers with beautiful, unaffected voices.) Sometimes a group of friends will form a club and lend their records in rotation. In some cities, albums can be rented from the public library in the same way as books. Records can sometimes be rented from a local music store for a daily charge.



#### **4. EMPLOYEE SERVICES**

You will hear people say, "Of course everyone ought to know that he should treat facilities at work in the same way that he'd treat his own things." That's true as far as it goes, but not all the equipment and furniture maintained for employees' use is duplicated at home. We have no elevator running from our front hall to the bedrooms. There is no electric adding machine blocking the way to the pantry. When dinner is served, we take our place at the table, not in a long line. Although we may intend to cooperate and not to abuse our privileges, many of the services that a firm provides for its employees are new to us when we go to work for the first time.



## IN THE CAFETERIA

In one firm the practice of saving seats and of saving places in line in the cafeteria was causing so much criticism that the personnel manager decided to see just how much basis there was for the complaints.

To accommodate the large number of employees there had to be two lunch periods: from 12 to 1 o'clock, and from 1 to 2 o'clock. The personnel manager noticed that when some of the people in the first group had finished lunch, they would tip their chairs forward against the table. This saved places for their friends who came in for the second lunch period from 1 to 2 o'clock. While it was convenient for those of the second group who had places saved for them, the rest of the employees, without earlier friends, were left to wander around with their trays until they came to chairs that were not held. The confusion was increased because at many tables the chairs remained tipped for people who had changed their minds and were eating elsewhere that day.

As a result of his survey, the personnel manager made a rule that no places were to be saved. Then people were able to find seats more quickly.

Another rule had to be made directing those waiting in line not to move ahead of others already in the line, because it had been noticed that some of the employees were in the habit of slipping into the front of the line among their friends. A person who might have been twentieth in line when he arrived, would still be twentieth in line 5 minutes later, because so many were pushing ahead of him.

When anyone is eating, it is annoying to have others standing close by, waiting for him to finish. It is especially irritating, of course, to feel someone's breath on his neck, or to get a shove every now and then. When a lunchroom is too small

for the crowd, those who have tables are expected to give up their places as soon as they have finished and not to linger. However, it seems unreasonable for newcomers to be bent on having a particular location when there are other tables in the room that are unoccupied.

~~When a person has taken his dishes of food off his tray,~~ he should place the empty tray on a side table or on an unoccupied table, where the bus boy can see it and pick it up. In a crowded room, however, it would be easier to leave the dishes on the tray. When it is necessary to sit at a table that has not been cleared off, the best thing to do, if possible, is to place the used dishes on a serving table, where they will be out of everyone's way.

One man does not know that his thoughtlessness in this small matter caused him to lose out on a very good promotion. His employer saw him come along with a tray of food, ponder over several vacant tables, and then fussily move along to one farther off whose location evidently suited him better. The bus boy had not yet cleared the table, so the man stacked the used dishes. Then, without a moment's hesitation, he put them down in front of a girl who was eating her lunch alone at the next table.

The employer felt that a person so lacking in judgment would never do to act as representative of the firm in its important contacts.

When a company cafeteria is operated on a nonprofit basis, service is sometimes not provided for clearing the tables. Everyone, then—the boss included—is expected to leave his place in perfect condition ~~for the next person~~. This means taking away all dishes and left-over food, wiping the table with a paper napkin, and seeing that the sugar bowl and salt and pepper shakers are in their proper positions.

Directions are usually posted for placing glasses on one tray and silver in another, for throwing scraps and paper

into an incinerator, and so on. When such requests are disregarded, the work of the kitchen attendants is made needlessly hard.

#### IN REST ROOMS

In the case of a number of firms, the rest rooms are beautifully furnished. There are thick rugs and comfortable chairs, and the windows are expensively curtained. Not all of the employees will be accustomed to such rooms at home. In fact, some of the girls may have very little realization of the beauty and value of their rest-room surroundings. How can you tell? By the way that they treat these lovely things. When a girl grinds out a cigarette under her heel, instead of in the ash tray, she doesn't know about good floor coverings. When she wipes her sticky fingers on a corner of the draperies, you wonder whether she has anything hanging in her own home except a kitchen towel.

Even when a room is furnished poorly, there is no reason why it should be misused. Habitual misuse may explain why the management won't spend money to replace things or to provide better ones. Results often have been obtained when the girls have taken good care of what facilities they had and then have asked the management seriously and frequently for better accommodations. On the other hand, it has been found that girls gained nothing by abusing a place and complaining among themselves about it.

Sometimes a room would look better if everyone had a clear understanding of his responsibility toward its maintenance.

~~The night porter~~—not the girl employees—is supposed to sweep the room and empty the waste containers and the floor-stand type of ash trays.

The windows are washed when the rest of the firm's win-  
dows are done.

When there is a matron on duty in the daytime, she ~~dusts~~ the room the first thing every morning. Once during the day should be often enough to empty and wipe the small ash trays and straighten out the pillows. If there is no separate rest room for girls who are ill, the matron also places a supply of fresh towels near the couch pillow and removes any used towels from the hamper.

In firms where there is no matron, the girls take turns carrying out these light duties. At the start, the names of all the girls are typed alphabetically on a piece of paper, which is pasted inside the door. Two girls work together for one week, the next two girls for one week, and so on. Without some form of self-management, the work might fall unfairly on a few who would be good-natured enough and neat enough to do it.

It is left to the girls to see that a room is kept in general good order. When they eat their lunches, they are expected to be careful about setting down anything like a bottle of soda or a cup without a saucer. One firm with branch offices buys all its sofas and chairs with narrow, curved arms, so that bottles and cups cannot be placed on them and leave stains.

All lunch papers, scraps of food, and peelings should be thrown away. An uncovered wastebasket is not the most suitable place, so a firm generally provides a large container with a swinging cover.

The place for using make-up and combing one's hair is the washroom, not the rest room. When there is not more than one rest room, it is understood that the couch is reserved for girls who are not feeling well. When someone comes in to lie down and finds there the same girls who are always lolling on the couch and chatting, she should not hesitate to ask them, "Do you mind if I lie down, please?"

Before she lies down, a girl always removes her shoes. When she is leaving, she places in the hamper the towel that she has rested her head on, spreads a fresh one on the pillow, and folds up the blanket evenly. It would be uninviting for the next girl to find things rumpled.

When towels and a blanket are not provided, a girl can be a good sport and make a cleansing tissue and her coat do as substitutes.

Employers are sometimes extremely critical of the condition in which not only the rest rooms, but the washrooms, are left. It takes only a few seconds to wipe a washbowl with a paper towel after using it—something which experienced travelers have always done in Pullman trains as an act of courtesy. Dressing tables and mirror shelves will stay clean longer if early visitors remove their lipstick marks and powder and cigarette stubs. In a crowded room, the girls are expected to be unselfish about moving along so that others can have a chance at the mirror.

#### THE COMPANY LIBRARY

In most company libraries, the business and technical publications are lent free, while a charge of only 1 or 2 cents a day is made for popular fiction and nonfiction. With such low rates, it is a temptation to take out books for the whole family. Thoughtful as this may be toward the family, it will deprive others at work from reading the books. Since the library is intended primarily to benefit the employees, it would be best for each person to limit his selection to one book at a time.

By keeping a list of requests from the employees for books not in stock, the librarian will not only prove accommodating when she tries to fill the requests but she will have a guide when she does her buying.

When someone asks for a book that has already been borrowed, the librarian may make a notation on the file card and, when the book has been returned, she may telephone to the employee who is waiting for it. Besides being equitable to the employees, this system is practical from the company's standpoint. Through actual testing, it has been learned that less working time is lost when employees are notified that when they keep going to the library at every possible chance to see if a book has been returned.

#### USE OF THE FIRM'S ROOMS AFTER WORK

When employees feel that it would be pleasant to organize some activity after work, they quite often consider the possibility of using the firm's premises. The activities that are most popular include bridge clubs, sewing classes, Red Cross instruction, and rehearsals for a show.

When permission is granted to use the property after working hours, the cost of lighting and additional heating is borne by the management. If an effort is made to compute the charge accurately and pass it on to a group, neither the management nor the employees are satisfied. Furthermore firms have learned that as an investment in good will the amount is not high.

The practice of paying for additional expenses is about the same everywhere. The professional coach who comes to rehearsals is paid a flat fee for putting on the show, and this is paid out of the ticket sale. When classwork requires a paid instructor, the cost may be met wholly by the firm or it may be divided among the employees who attend. Experience has shown that the only way to conduct an evening of bridge successfully within a firm is to forbid betting of any kind.

It seems as if there should not be any difficulty in having a small class after work, but sometimes there is. People will

join a club before dues are announced, and then feel that the assessment is too high; or a meeting night will have to be changed, and notices won't go out in time. In order to avoid the possibility of a misunderstanding, you may find the following rules helpful. They are compiled from the experiences of others who have managed classes after work.

Dues should be collected twice a season in advance: in September and in January. If an employee is absent, there can be no refund, as the amount of dues is based on full attendance by everyone.

When a person terminates his employment, the unused balance of his course should be refunded to him. The club treasurer is generally able to find someone who would like to join for the remainder of the term. If not, he will find that the management believes it better policy to pay the terminated employee's balance than to have him leave with a feeling of ill will because it is withheld.

Only occasionally has it been found satisfactory to have single dues paid at each session. Too often the collector is confronted with the difficulty of trying to collect back dues: people stay away when they're short of cash before pay day, and then resent paying for lost instruction; or some will come week after week and never have any money with them. Instead of leaving it to the collector to have to use tact in extracting these payments, it is better to eliminate the situations in the first place.

When the cost of an instructor is to be met by the class, it is divided proportionately among all those who sign up. In announcing the formation of a class, the employees who are in charge will save themselves embarrassment if they also announce, "No class will be held if there are fewer than ——— members, while ——— will be the maximum number that can be taught successfully at one session."

When an evening session is over, everyone is asked to put back into position whatever equipment he was using. The last ones to leave should see that the windows are closed and locked and that the lights are put out.

The success of a class may be attributed to several factors, such as comfortable quarters and good instruction, but primarily it will be due to the friendliness in a group. When everyone agrees at the beginning of the year on the way that things shall be conducted, it will be evident from the start that the gatherings are going to be fun.

#### OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Office work is relatively safe compared with the hazards of the factory and the home. Of the accidents that do occur, most of them could have been avoided if people had exercised consideration. The management is sometimes to blame, especially when it is so shortsighted as not to repair broken floors and weak steps. At the other extreme, a spendthrift management will have its floors waxed too assiduously and its stairs covered with some expensive material that is about as safe as a coat of ice. When the employees themselves are responsible for getting hurt, the cause is the cause of most accidents—carelessness.

Since the study of office safety is so exhaustive, only the common hazards that deal with etiquette are covered in the following list:

A girl should not be allowed to lift furniture or to carry a typewriter or other heavy equipment. If there is no porter service, one of the men in the office may be asked to help; if no men are available, a girl should take her work to the machine.

When the carriage of a typewriter is left jutting out, someone walking close by may run into it and be hurt.



Such objects as wastebaskets, portable machines, file stools, and electric cords should be placed where no one can fall over them. If it is necessary to stretch a cord across an aisle or between two desks, it is customary to place an ordinary piece of white paper—8½ by 11 inches—over the cord. This will attract attention and minimize the danger of anyone's tripping over it.

If you should notice a piece of damaged equipment, such as a broken chair or a worn-out electric cord, someone in charge should be notified at once before anyone can be hurt. If you are in charge, you should remove the damaged article from general use until a repairman has come.

In showing anyone how to use equipment with which he is unfamiliar, the experienced operator should be careful to point out any moving parts that are dangerous. For instance, there is a certain type of machine for making reproductions of copy that runs electrically. If the operator starts the motor and forgets to release the handle, its speedy turning will give her a terrific punching. There is another machine in which an operator who has not been warned can get her fingers pinched quite painfully between the drum and the tray. In shaving the cylinders that are used on dictating machines, the importance of keeping the shield attached cannot be emphasized too strongly.

When someone is required to get supplies from a high shelf, he will risk falling if he stands on a chair. An alert engineer from a firm's insurance company never fails to point out the necessity of providing a small stepladder or stool, as the number of accidents from falling off chairs is surprisingly high.

The most dangerous place for pointed objects, like scissors and letter openers, is between papers; inside a desk drawer is the safest place for them when they are not in use. When

these articles are being handed to anyone, they are extended with the handle toward the person who is to take them.

In many firms the use of common pins for fastening papers is not allowed. People are too often pricked when the point of a pin has not been carefully buried between the sheets of paper that it holds together. Staples and paper clips are considered preferable, from the standpoint both of safety and of efficiency.

#### ELEVATOR ETIQUETTE

**Passengers.** In buildings where people live, such as hotels, apartment houses, and clubs, men are expected to remove their hats in an elevator when a lady enters. In stores and office buildings, the nature of the surroundings and the crowded condition of the cars make it unnecessary and often impossible for the men to do so. However, when a man can remove his hat easily, it is a courteous gesture, especially when he is greeting a lady passenger.

Sometimes a "No Smoking" sign is posted inside an elevator, but even in the absence of a sign, a passenger is expected to show consideration for others by not smoking. If a man has not finished a cigar, he might hold it close by his side, with the lighted end cupped in his hand. It would be considered thoughtless for anyone to light up while waiting for an elevator and then to get into a crowded car and hold his cigarette dangerously near other passengers.

When people near the back of a crowded elevator have to get out, one or two persons nearest the door can step out to let them pass. They should quickly step back in, so as not to delay the rest of the trip.

People who are waiting to enter a conveyance, such as an elevator or a subway car, are supposed to let passengers out first. In fairness to everyone, the "ladies first" rule cannot

always be observed. In the morning and at night, when crowds of employees approach the elevators, if the men should step back until the ladies were all accommodated, they would in many cases be late starting work in the morning and late for their trains at night. The situation is the same when people are leaving an elevator. The men ordinarily let the ladies out first; but when the cars are crowded, it is less awkward if those nearest the door leave first.

An operator may have partly closed the door when he sees someone hurrying toward the elevator. Although not required to do so, he may wait for the newcomer. When such a courtesy is shown, it is only natural for the passenger to say, "Thank you," or "Thank you very much for waiting."

When there is more than one elevator operator, one of them may sometimes be asked to go on an errand. For this service a tip should be given, almost without exception. When there is only one elevator in a building, it would be unfair to other tenants to ask the operator to suspend service for your convenience. Getting coffee and dropping mail in the box at the corner must then be taken care of by yourself.

**Operators.** An impersonal attitude is the safest one for an operator. This requires him to be pleasant, to answer passengers when they say "Good morning" and "Good night," but with the greatest part of his attention directed to handling the responsibilities of his job.

In large firms and public buildings, the management frequently issues an instruction pamphlet to each new operator. Together with the directions for the mechanical operation of a car, there are rules of etiquette. These include the proper method of announcing floors, asking people to move back in the car, preventing people from overloading a car, and so on.

For the benefit of operators whose firms have not drawn up definite requirements, the following summary is made.

*On the lobby level.* When loading your elevator, stand facing the controls. If it is necessary to ask passengers to move back in the car, say, "Please step to the rear." Don't try to help them along with a push, however slight.

When the elevator that precedes your car is being loaded on the lobby floor, stand in the center of your door, blocking entrance. This indicates that your elevator is not yet taking on passengers.

If passengers have neglected to state their floors as they entered your car, ask them before you leave the lobby floor: "Floors, please?" If they are so busy talking together that you get no response, repeat your question. When the passengers reply, say, "Thank you."

*En route.* Announce the floor distinctly at each stop—for example, "Fourth floor"; then, after closing the door, announce the next stop that has been requested, such as, "Sixth floor next." This gives a passenger a chance to speak up and ask for the fifth floor if he neglected to do so before starting up.

If passengers are waiting at a floor when you stop to discharge passengers, say, "Going down," or "Going up," as the case may be. If someone is slow in coming to your car because he is engaged in conversation, ask, "Down, please?" or "Up, please?"

When your car is full, and people are still trying to work their way in, say, "That is all, please." If necessary, extend your arm to signify that the door is about to close.

When operating a down elevator, announce, "Main floor next," just after the last stop above the lobby. When the main floor is reached, say, "This is the main floor."

*Handling annoyances.* If you should ever be annoyed by disrespectful attentions from a passenger, the management

would expect you to report such a matter promptly to the elevator starter or, if there is no starter, to someone in authority.

If a passenger should criticize your operation of the car or try to start an argument, you might make the following reply: "I'm sorry, but I am obeying the instructions given me." If this doesn't satisfy him, it would be better for you to say nothing more.

*Appearance.* A certain firm expanded to such an extent, a few years ago, that it had to buy a building of its own. In taking over this much-needed space, six elevators were acquired.

One of the first things that the building engineer did was to draw up a list of suggestions governing the appearance of the elevator operators. Then he called the girls together to discuss the list.

Instead of finding it too much bother to look trim and well groomed, the girls were glad to have a high standard to keep, and they have always made a fine impression.

The requirements were these:

Your uniform should be kept clean. Wear a freshly laundered blouse. Keep shoes clean and polished. Jackets are to be kept buttoned. Have hair well arranged. Wear no lapel pins, long earrings, or dangling bracelets.

Do not chew gum or eat candy or food while on duty.

Smoking is prohibited.

Do not sing or whistle while on duty.

The engineer recognized that the elevator operator, like the receptionist and the secretary, is seen by many people every day. Like them, by her appearance and manner she can affect the prestige of the firm's personnel as a whole.

## FOR DISCUSSION

✓ 1. Name six courtesies that you are expected to observe when eating in a cafeteria. Can you think of other things that you can do to help make mealtimes pleasant?

✓ 2. If you should work in a firm where there is a library for employees, how would you apply the same rules of courtesy that you observe in taking out books from the public library?

3. If you were organizing a class in your firm's rooms after work, how would you plan to run it?

✓ 4. If your firm should grant permission to use one of its rooms for group meetings after work, how should you leave the room at the end of each session? *In order - clean desk*

5. Does your school or your firm furnish other facilities for students or employees besides those mentioned in this book? Perhaps a recreation hall? Tennis courts? Swimming pool? How can everyone cooperate in the maintenance and fair use of these properties?

✓ 6. Name eight hazards in the office that can be avoided through the practice of etiquette.

7. Through talking with friends who work in various firms, do you know of hazards in their particular types of business that can be avoided through the practice of etiquette?

✓ 8. What can you, as a passenger, do to help maintain good elevator service?

9. What firms are you familiar with—both large and small—in which the employees and management are cooperative in their maintenance of employee services?

10. If there are large firms in your locality that you may visit, do so at the direction of your instructor. Take note of the various employee services, as described in this chapter, and see how they are operated.

*Especially for women*

1. What cooperation is expected of you toward keeping a rest room in good order?

2. What cooperation is expected of you toward keeping a washroom in good order?

3. What suggestions would you make to improve the way that the rest rooms and washrooms in your school or your firm are treated?

*Especially for men*

1. When men employees are provided with a smoking and reading room, what are they expected to do toward its maintenance?

2. When is a man expected to remove his hat in an elevator?

3. Draw up a list of suggestions concerning the appearance and manners of men elevator operators.





## **Part 2**

### **Etiquette Toward the Public**





## 5. RECEIVING CUSTOMERS AND CALLERS

In dealing with the public, a person finds himself in countless situations where he needs to follow the rules of business etiquette. As a basis for these specific rules, tested and followed by those who have had long experience, the right attitude has been found to be of primary importance. People may use all the "pleases" and "thank you's" that they choose; but unless their words are uttered in a pleasant manner, they convey no graciousness whatsoever.

A pleasant manner, in this connection, means one that is genuinely warm and helpful, not falsely sweet; one where the smile is the spontaneous kind that comes from having a good disposition. A pleasant manner is unaffected, characterized by an agreeableness that is natural to the well-bred person.

## GREETING

Until 12 o'clock, noon, a caller is greeted with "Good morning," or with "Good morning, Mr. Smith" if his name is known. Until 6 o'clock, it is customary in business to say, "Good afternoon." In firms that are open later, the greeting is "Good evening."

Firms require their employees to use care in pronouncing a visitor's name correctly. The secretary who has written letters for her employer to Mr. Johnston will appear less cordial than she means to be if she greets the visitor as "Mr. Johnson." The beautician with a book of appointments in front of her is considered careless if she calls Mrs. McAfee "Mrs. McFee," and Miss Carlson "Miss Carson."

Many people hearing a name for the first time can remember it, and this is one of the greatest assets of the receptionist. Those whose memories are not so good make it a practice to jot down the name on a handy pad of paper, so that during the conversation that follows it will not be necessary to interrupt and ask again for the name. This habit has been found particularly helpful when an interview is likely to develop, or when the nature of a customer's visit may make it necessary for the employee to do some telephoning within the firm to straighten out a matter.

When a caller's name is hard to pronounce, or if it is given so rapidly that you fail to understand it, you may say, "I'm sorry, I didn't quite catch your name." When it has been given a second time, repeat it, to be sure you have it right. Then add "Thank you" pleasantly.

If you are showing another employee a task, or if you are both engaged in an important business discussion, the caller who is standing near you still comes first. In courtesy to those with whom you work, however, when you interrupt the

conversation you say, "Excuse me while I attend to this client" or "Excuse me while I wait on this customer. As soon as I finish, I'll be back to help you."

If you are absent from a busy counter for a few moments, you may find several people waiting for your attention when you return. Instead of taking them at random, ask, "Who is next, please?" They will appreciate your fairness in inviting them to speak in turn.

Since a caller expects to be greeted agreeably, he is quick to notice any breach of manners. It may be gum chewing, eating, or yawning. It may be an argument between two employees, carried on in full view. When a caller has reason to form a poor opinion of his reception, later attempts at graciousness will fail to impress him.

**Smoking.** There is no problem about employees smoking at a reception desk or counter, because the management will not allow it. In a private office smoking is usually permitted, but an employee lays his cigarette in an ash tray or, in some cases, puts it out entirely, the instant a visitor enters. Men visitors, even more than women, have been so critical after having been greeted by someone who was smoking that they have taken their business elsewhere. After a conversation has started, it depends on individual circumstances whether or not a visitor should be offered something to smoke. The person occupying the office is supposed to use common sense in passing out cigars and cigarettes.

**Men going coatless in hot weather.** In stores where there is no air conditioning, the comfort of the salesmen seems to be governed by the type of merchandise that is sold. In a stationery or a hardware store, for instance, the men are generally permitted by the management to go coatless, but in a jewelry store, that is not so likely to be the case.

In an office, during hot weather, a man finds it comfortable

to work in his shirt sleeves. However, when his secretary announces a lady visitor, he may feel that he should hurry into his coat, or he may wonder whether he may properly leave it off, as long as he apologizes.

Old customs die hard, and a man is likely to put on his coat if he works in a bank, a brokerage house, a law firm, or any similar type of business where the seriousness of the transactions seems to foster a formal atmosphere. It has been found, too, that some elderly clients are likely to take it as a personal offense if they are greeted, during an office call, by a man who is not wearing a coat.

In other types of offices, where the visitors are all business people themselves, men employees can be somewhat less concerned about this fine point of dress. After all, a good, clean shirt, fastened at the cuffs and accompanied by a suitable necktie, should be nothing to make excuses for.

**When to stand.** When you are occupied at work some distance from the office gate or counter, you will stand up and step forward to greet a visitor; but you remain seated when you are at work near the callers as they enter. This would be the case if you worked in a beauty shop or if you were operating a switchboard. The same rules apply to a man as to a woman. A man could not keep getting up and sitting down, for instance, while he was attending to people at an information gate, or receiving payments, or selling tickets.

In a private office it is different. A man always rises to receive women visitors. He rises for men visitors, too, as a rule. However, that is not customary if he spends his whole day interviewing applicants in an employment agency or if he is meeting a constant stream of salesmen in his job as purchasing agent.

A woman in a private office is not required to rise, but at times it is gracious of her to do so. One woman lawyer rises

to greet her older clients. A secretary who has known her employer's parents for years always comes forward and shakes hands when they make an occasional visit to the office. As a mark of respect to the clergy, a woman stands to greet them.

When a man stands up to greet another man, they shake hands. Hand shaking is not required of a man and a woman or of two women, but there are times when a woman offers her hand and it is instantly accepted. She might be greeting an old friend or meeting for the first time someone with whom she has been carrying on a detailed business correspondence. There are many occasions for business associates to feel cordial toward one another on meeting, and the hand shaking is spontaneous.

Whenever a person stands, he or she remains standing until the visitor is seated. Since a visitor is not supposed to take a chair without an invitation, the one who is receiving him indicates the chair beside his own desk and says, "Won't you sit down?"

In order that an office may be ready to accommodate several visitors at a time whenever the occasion occurs, a few chairs are arranged comfortably in a convenient place and left there. When an unusually large group is expected, a secretary asks the porter or one of the younger men in the office to carry in extra chairs. A girl is not supposed to move the furniture.

A man does not rise to greet employees who come into his office frequently. He is with them so much that it would be like standing up at home upon the entrance of the family. When a man employee is young, however, he probably makes a favorable impression if he stands to greet executives and women employees who make only occasional visits.

**How people with titles are addressed.** In the course of an ordinary business day, neither the President of the United

States nor a Cardinal is likely to walk into a business establishment. However, since information is being given here for addressing congressmen and ministers, whom one is more likely to meet, a complete list is included.

#### HOLDERS OF POLITICAL OFFICE

President of the United States	<i>Mr. President</i> , while throughout a conversation one would occasionally say <i>Sir</i>
The Vice-President	<i>Mr. Vice-President</i> , and <i>Sir</i> in conversation
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court	<i>Mr. Chief Justice</i> , and <i>Sir</i> in conversation
Associate Justice of the Supreme Court	<i>Mr. Justice</i> , and <i>Sir</i> in conversation
Member of the President's Cabinet	<i>Mr. Secretary</i> , and <i>Sir</i> in conversation. A woman member would be addressed as <i>Madam Secretary</i> , whether married or single
Senator (United States, or state)	<i>Senator Smith</i> , and <i>Senator</i> in conversation
Congressman (United States, or state)	<i>Mr. Smith</i> ; <i>Mrs. Smith</i> or <i>Miss Smith</i> for a woman member
Governor	<i>Governor Smith</i> , and <i>Governor</i> in conversation
Mayor	<i>Mr. Mayor</i> . A woman mayor would be addressed as <i>Madam Mayor</i> , whether married or single



## MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY

## Catholic

Cardinal	<i>Your Eminence</i>
Archbishop	<i>Your Excellency</i>
Bishop	<i>Bishop Graney</i>
Monsignor	<i>Monsignor Graney</i>
Priest	<i>Father, or Father Graney</i>
Mother Superior	<i>Reverend Mother</i>
Member of a sisterhood	<i>Sister, or Sister Agnes</i>
Member of a brotherhood	<i>Brother, or Brother John</i>

## Protestant

Bishop	<i>Bishop Thompson</i>
Clergyman	<i>Mr. Thompson, or Dr. Thompson, if he holds the degree of D.D., LL.D., Ph.D., or D.S.T. In some denominations the title varies, like Pastor Thompson, but anyone who is not a member of a particular church is not expected to know the differences. (It is not correct to address a clergyman as "Reverend.")</i>

## Jewish

Rabbi	<i>Rabbi Wise, or Dr. Wise if he holds a doctor's degree</i>
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## PERSONNEL OF THE ARMY, NAVY, AND MARINES

Officers of the Navy with grade of Commander or higher	<i>Commander Smith. Captain Smith. Commodore Smith. Admiral Smith</i> for higher grades. Throughout a conversation a man is generally addressed by his title alone, without his surname: <i>Commander, or Captain, etc.</i>
Officers of the Army and Marines with grade of Captain or higher	<i>Captain Smith. Major Smith. Colonel Smith</i> for Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels. <i>General Smith</i> for higher grades. Throughout a conversation the title alone is generally used: <i>Captain, Major, etc.</i>
Junior officers and all enlisted men	<i>Mr. Smith</i>

(Superiors are almost invariably addressed as *Sir* by men and officers in lesser grades of the Army, Navy, and Marines.)

## WHEN A CALLER HAS TO WAIT

When a receptionist, clerk, or secretary is relieved during her lunch hour by another employee, it is important that she tell her substitute whom the callers are waiting to see. You have probably visited offices where a substitute would seat herself at a desk and assume that a visitor would speak up when the employee he was waiting for passed through on his way back from lunch. However, a visitor frequently

is making a call for the first time, so that he cannot recognize the one he wishes to see, even if that employee does pass. So he keeps on waiting and waiting.

On other occasions, a caller may be kept waiting for a long time although there are ways of taking care of him quickly. The following illustrations show how experienced executives give consideration to their visitors' time.

As advertising manager for her firm, Miss L. is visited by people on various errands—by salesmen, job applicants, artists and printers with finished work, and by messenger boys with proofs.

The stenographer who sits in the waiting room outside Miss L.'s office works for two other people besides Miss L., so she is not always at her desk to take care of callers when they come in.

To be sure that no one is kept waiting needlessly, Miss L. always keeps her own office door open. When she is occupied with a visitor whose business will take up considerable time, someone may come into the outer office who, she knows, will not detain her long. She says to the visitor already in her office, "Will you excuse me for a couple of minutes, please?" and goes out to speak to the later comer.

This is fair to both visitors—the newcomer is able to transact his business and go right out without waiting, and the first visitor, who has many details to settle, can continue without being hurried away to make room for those who are waiting.

Mr. S. is owner of a small manufacturing concern. With many details claiming his attention in the factory part of the building, he often has to leave his office just as salesmen are coming in to see him.

Instead of causing them to spend time in long waits, he gives them the courtesy of an explanation as he is going out: "I have to go into the factory for about an hour. Have you any other calls to make in this vicinity and then come back again?" Or, "I'm afraid I'll be in the factory most of the afternoon, but I'd like to learn something about that machine you're selling. Could

you leave a booklet with my secretary? After I've had a chance to look it over, I'll call you up and we'll make an appointment." Or, "Hello, Jim, I still have quite a few of those frames you sold me last spring, so I'm not buying any more. However, if you don't mind waiting for about 20 minutes, I'll be glad to talk with you. I'm leaving it to you."

Knowing the value of good will in business, Mr. S. never fails to give the same consideration to others that he would like to have given to him.

#### WHEN A CALLER IS LEAVING

A man stands up when his visitor rises to go. Two men frequently shake hands, especially if they have had a long conversation and have arrived at mutually agreeable terms. When the visitor is a woman, a man walks to the door and opens it for her.

A woman seated at a desk does not usually stand when people take leave of her; but when she has been talking with an elderly or a prominent caller, she instinctively rises and walks toward the door. In such cases, she would open the door for a woman, but a man would be in the habit of opening it for himself.

"Good morning," "Good afternoon," and "Good evening" are the established forms not only for greetings, but also for bidding people good-by. Despite their correctness, however, the friendlier "Good-by" is generally used.

People often end their business conversations in other ways. The salesperson who has made a sale, and the cashier who accepts a payment, terminate their transactions with "Thank you," or with "Thank you very much" when the amount is large. The hotel clerk says to a newly registered guest, "I hope you'll enjoy your visit." The credit adjustor says, "Call me any time you have a question about your bill."

When an employee has rendered service, as in the case of the hostess, receptionist, and guide, and he has been thanked, he merely answers, "You're welcome," and smiles pleasantly.

#### WHEN A MARRIED COUPLE WORK TOGETHER

Business manners have long required that a married couple address each other as "Mr. Smith" and "Mrs. Smith"—not as "John" and "Mary"—before members of the public. When they refer to each other, they still say, "Mr. Smith will help you," and not "My husband will help you."

This has been found a good rule in city offices and large concerns, where employees are required to observe a formal atmosphere. However, in a small community where the customers all know that a couple is married, it seems unnecessarily formal to use the Mr. and Mrs. designations.

When the wife of a doctor or a dentist acts as his assistant, she always addresses her husband before others as "Doctor." When speaking to patients, he refers to his wife as "Mrs. Smith." In the office before patients there is no need for him to use any name, for he could be speaking to no one else when he says, "May I have Mr. Thompson's records, please?" and, "Will you please put Mrs. White down for an appointment next Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock?"

#### THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE PUBLIC

Together with the general observance of etiquette as discussed so far, there are specific practices followed by those who constantly meet the public.

**Receptionist.** In some firms, the executives try to see all callers, whether or not they have appointments. When this is the case, the receptionist asks a stranger, "Will you please tell me your name and firm?" On hearing it, she says, "Thank you, Mr. Brown. Won't you be seated?"

This invitation to take a seat several feet away has a three-fold purpose:

1. It affords the receptionist privacy in calling the executive or his secretary. After his name has been announced, no visitor would be pleased to hear the receptionist saying, "M-m-m. Yes, he is. All right, I'll tell him you can't, this week."

2. If the executive has gone to see someone in another office in the building, his secretary will have to reach him and call the receptionist back. During this wait, it shows thoughtfulness toward the caller to relieve him of standing.

3. When a receptionist takes care of a switchboard, there may be times when she will be too rushed for a few moments to call an executive at once. A visitor standing near may not understand this, and he will think he is being neglected as she takes care of a necessary call.

Sometimes it is unavoidable for a receptionist to be overheard as she puts in a call. A visitor may have answered, "I don't mind waiting," or a particular lobby or waiting room may not be furnished with chairs. In that case, the receptionist announces a call by saying, "Mr. Brown is here to see Mr. Smith," even when Mr. Smith is on the other end of the line. It will be easy, then, for the receptionist to temper Mr. Smith's inability to see the visitor by saying, "Mr. Smith's secretary will see you. Won't you take a seat until she comes down?" or, "Mr. Smith has just returned from a trip, so he'll be quite busy all day. If you could make an appointment for another time, he'll be very glad to see you."

In a firm where the executives give preference to those with appointments, the caller is asked, "Have you an appointment?" If he has none, it will be necessary to ask him, "What do you wish to see Mr. Smith about, please?" Experienced

receptionists find that when this is done in a warm, friendly way, little resistance is met.

On those rare occasions when a business caller does not wish to be frank, the receptionist continues to be pleasant as she explains, "I'm sorry, but I'm required to ask. I'm sure that if you'll give me an idea of the purpose of your visit I'll be able to help you."

As a last resort, the receptionist telephones the executive's secretary and says, "Mr. Brown wishes to see Mr. Smith, but he prefers not to explain his call. Do you wish to see him?" Secretaries to prominent people are accustomed to callers of this type.

Not all calls are specific requests to see members of a firm. Sometimes a person seeks information that the receptionist is not authorized to give, so she refers him to someone in the firm who can best answer his questions. A caller may make an unusual request, or he may not be able to remember the name of the person or department that he wants, or he may be in the wrong building. Anyone whom a firm considers capable enough to be a receptionist should be alert and anxious to help. By the exercise of a little imagination and a great deal of patience, even the vaguest errands can finally be interpreted.

When a visitor is calling on someone for the first time, the receptionist gives brief but explicit directions: "The elevator is around the corner. Mr. Smith's office is on the eighth floor—Room 802—turn to the right as you get off the elevator." "Mr. Smith can see you at once. The fourth door on your right." Pointing is not only impolite, but it is unnecessary when directions are clear.

In various ways a receptionist shows other little courtesies. When she has to ask a caller to wait, she remembers his name. Instead of calling out, "Mis-ter Br-ow-n," when it is time for

someone to see a member of the firm, she simply nods in his direction and speaks his name quietly. She talks with each visitor in a clear, but low, voice, so that others cannot overhear.

When asked by a curious caller, "Who is that man who just went out with the big boss?" she can avoid giving a definite answer by saying in an agreeable manner, "I'm afraid I didn't notice."

She discourages people from waiting around and being in the way of visitors, by not encouraging them in the first place.

As her firm's foremost representative, she is careful at all times to act in a way that could never be criticized, either by the management or by the public.

**Secretary.** As a general rule, a secretary announces callers as follows:

If her employer is not engaged or talking on the telephone, she goes into his office and says, "Mr. Brown of the National Company is here." She waits for her employer to make some acknowledgment, even if it is only "O.K."

Then she goes out and asks the caller, "Will you come in, Mr. Brown?" If Mr. Brown has been sitting near by, she can hold the door open until he has entered. If he is seated across the room, she walks over to him and says, "Mr. Smith will see you," but she does not ordinarily go back and open the door.

However, if the visitor is a lady, an elderly person, or a member of the clergy, it shows an agreeable attitude on the secretary's part to open the door and stand aside as the visitor enters.

By announcing the person's firm, as well as his name, a secretary makes it easy for her employer to get into the business at hand after the greeting is over. He finds himself in an embarrassing position when he has shaken Mr. Brown's hand



cordially and then has to grope around with, "Er-er, let's see, what company are you with?"

When her employer is talking on the telephone, a secretary can usually hear his voice through the partitions. She waits until he has finished talking before she goes in.

If he is already engaged with a visitor she writes on a slip of paper, "Mr. Brown of the National Company is here," takes it in and lays it on his desk. She knows from experience whether her employer will give her an answer to take to the visitor waiting or whether he will glance at the note without comment but bring the conversation to a close as soon as it is convenient for him to do so.

When a secretary has come out of her employer's office, she says to the new caller, "Mr. Smith will be free in several minutes," if that is the message, or, "Mr. Smith has a visitor, but I'm sure he will be free shortly," if her employer has said nothing.

If Mr. Smith has a visitor and the new caller has no appointment, it is not customary for a secretary to interrupt. There are various exceptions, however, which an experienced secretary is quick to recognize: if her employer is talking with another member of the firm it is usually expected that a secretary will announce an outside visitor; when a long conversation is in progress and the visitor is someone whom she is sure her employer would want to see, she lets her employer know he is there; if the caller is a member of his family or a personal friend, announcement is made without hesitation.

Executives vary in their attitude toward the visitor without an appointment. In some cases an executive is willing to see everyone, and his secretary has no problem. Even when she is unable to extract a visitor's name, she can go in and tell her employer, "A man would like to see you, but he

won't give me any information," and the answer will be, "Send him in and I'll see what he wants."

In the case of another employer that wouldn't do at all. He wishes to know a person's name, his firm, and the reason for his call. With experience, a secretary is almost always able to tell after brief questioning which of the callers her employer is likely to see, and which ones she can take care of or refer to others in the organization who handle particular matters.

A secretary knows better than anyone else that her busy employer will never get his work done if he sees everybody. However, her attempt to keep interruptions to a minimum must be done with the greatest consideration for a visitor's feelings. To a salesman she says, "Mr. Smith doesn't plan to buy any more equipment for about 6 months, but if you want to leave your card and some literature I'll keep them in our reference file." Or she might say, "I'm sorry, but Mr. Smith leaves all the buying to our purchasing agent. He's on the second floor."

Under the stress of business it may be a temptation sometimes to make such an answer as "Mr. Smith is not in," or, "He's in conference." These lies fool no one, while the truth saves a salesman from making unnecessary trips back again.

If a visitor is seeking a job, and an executive cannot be disturbed, the secretary does her best to put the applicant at ease and help him along, in a sympathetic interview. Many a firm would not have some of its best employees today if they had not been encouraged and practically "discovered" in their first interviews with an intelligent secretary.

When a stranger refuses to explain the purpose of his call, a secretary is required to continue the questioning started by the receptionist. She asks, "Are you looking for a position?" or, "Have you something you wish to sell to Mr.

Smith?" or, "Are you connected with a benefit organization?" When the response is still noncommittal, a secretary can be sure that the visitor's business will be of no importance to her employer.

This type of caller may become a nuisance, however, if not handled tactfully, so it is well to bring the conversation to an amicable close. "Perhaps you'd like to write Mr. Smith a letter and explain your business?" the visitor is asked. If he seems receptive to the idea, but a little doubtful, he can be assured, "Mr. Smith will be sure to receive it personally. He reads all his mail."

When a visitor insists on waiting, it has been found best to let him wait, without comment. After a while he usually decides to talk, or he slips out and that is the end of the matter. Only in extreme cases, when an executive is very prominent and is the target of crank callers, is it necessary to ask one of his assistants to handle a troublesome situation.

**Service representative.** The variety of callers makes the work of the service representative interesting, but it also calls for much tact and understanding. As people come in—of all types and with all kinds of matters to be solved—they need the cooperation of someone who can put himself in their position temporarily.

Whether it is to open a budget account, to seek advice on the best kind of insurance to buy, or to question the charges on a telephone bill, the customer's mind is entirely taken up with his problem. Through his very title, the firm's "service representative" can show by an attentive attitude that he considers the problem important, too.

In some companies all the representatives are seated at desks spaced fairly far apart in one big office. This makes it possible for the clerk at the first desk to direct a caller promptly to someone who, she sees, is not already occupied

on the telephone or with another caller. When the work is solely bill collecting, however, private offices have been found preferable.

A disorderly desk suggests to visitors that the person using it is untidy, not that he's a busy little bee. In certain well-managed concerns, there is a rule that employees dealing with the public are to take care of one matter at a time and to have on the top of their desks only the material relating to the work they are doing.

In his zeal to protect his firm's interests, an occasional employee forgets that one way to do it is to keep the customers' good will. No matter how lengthy and exasperating some visits may be, the representative is expected to remain pleasant and obliging. The supervisor of one large staff of service representatives adds, "Be unfailingly gentle with people who are ill, crippled, elderly, or poor; and with those who have difficulty in speaking English. Their days are full of trials."

**Beautician.** The beautician is often a combination of receptionist, hostess, diplomat, and friend, besides being the capable operator. Because of the intimate nature of her work, she is greatly dependent on the personal reaction of her customers toward her manner and presence. In a woman's estimate of a beauty shop, she doesn't merely say, "They do good work." It means as much to her to be able to add, "And they're lovely girls."

So small a matter as making an appointment for a stranger is full of possibilities. If the woman is greeted by an attendant who is dressed immaculately and who has an attractive hair-do, she instantly forms a better impression of the shop than she would if the attendant's appearance showed carelessness. When the customer is given a welcoming smile, she is also quick to notice whether it is accompanied by an attentive

look at her face alone. There is nothing that is more annoying than to be greeted with a thorough appraisal from head to foot, as a mental price tag is put on everything that one is wearing.

On those rare occasions when it is necessary for a shop to avoid accepting as a customer anyone whose appearance is displeasing, the appointment clerk is careful to make the refusal sound genuine. She asks first her usual question, "When can you come?" and then, after leafing over the pages of the appointment book, she says, "I'm sorry, but we seem to be completely booked up."

When each booth is equipped with a small closet, the beautician is expected to take a customer's coat and put it on a hanger and place her hat carefully on the shelf. When the shop is dusted every day, these closet shelves should be wiped at the same time, to be sure that hats with dainty light trimmings are protected from dust. In addition, you will see a thoughtful beautician place a fresh cleansing tissue under each hat. When the customer is ready to leave, she is handed her hat first, so that she can adjust it carefully before the mirror, and then she is helped on with her coat.

**Hostess.** When the president of a chain of restaurants was hiring a hostess for his newest location, the interviewer at the employment agency asked him what type of girl he preferred. "Do you want a blonde or a brunette? Any particular height? Attractive appearance, of course?"

The experienced restaurant owner brushed these specifications aside. "She's got to look perfect, that's all. She's just got to look perfect."

A hostess knows that she must not have a hair out of place or a stocking seam twisted. Her make-up and nail polish must be applied faultlessly. If there is dandruff on the shoulders of her smart black dress, customers will wince. With the

assurance that she looks—yes, perfect—she can give full attention to her job.

Hers is not an easy job, as customers come pouring in; but when she can put forth a sincere effort to be charming, the task of receiving them is lessened. A smile is necessary not only for the sake of appearance, but because it relaxes the muscles. To recognize steady customers by greeting them with such pleasantries as "How are you, today?" and "Aren't we having wonderful weather?" pleases them, while at the same time it helps to relieve the monotony of the work.

A hostess is careful to take customers in turn, but they are not all well-mannered about taking their places where they belong. This requires attention on her part as she surveys the line, keeping in mind each one's position, so that when it is necessary she can ask, "Will you please step back in line?"

When she is faced by a newcomer who has taken a place unfairly in the front of the line, the hostess looks beyond her to the person whose place was usurped and says, "Were you next?" The answer is a grateful "Yes," and the customer is escorted to a table.

Perhaps other restaurants have the following system, which has proved extremely helpful in one large dining room.

Over the entrance to the room three signs are hung. On one the designation is "Single," on the next sign it is "Two," and on the third sign is lettered "Three or more." Sturdy railings form divisions for the customers as they stand in front of whichever sign applies to them.

To see the system work during a busy lunch hour is to appreciate its efficiency. As places become available at the tables, it is easy for the hostess to say, "Next, please," to the group that she can accommodate, without having to call into a crowd, "Single please—anyone alone?" and "A table for two. Any couples?"

Customers are not supposed to be led to a table until it has been cleared by the waitress and set up fresh. A hostess is sometimes expected to help, during rush hours, by brushing crumbs and emptying ash trays, but unless the manager requests such help it has been found best not to do anything that might cast reflection on the waitresses' efficiency.

The hostess always walks ahead of customers and pulls out their chairs for them. When a lady and gentleman are together the hostess moves out the man's chair first. She leaves it instantly and steps over to pull out for the lady the chair affording the best view—whether it is out a window or overlooking the room. When the lady has seated herself, the hostess helps to ease her chair toward the table. In a room with a bench along the wall, she pulls out the table, so that the lady can slip in easily. A gentleman is supposed to help his companion get seated comfortably at the table; but when a hostess or a headwaiter is standing close by, it would make an awkward situation if the escort, too, should be moving about the table, trying to assist.

When a lady is alone, the hostess pulls out her chair and helps her to ease it toward the table. In cases where there are two or more ladies, the hostess draws out the best chair last and holds it. When the age difference is not marked, it doesn't matter who takes this chair, but when one of the ladies is considerably older, she occupies it by tacit agreement. When a man is alone or in company with other men, the hostess pulls out chairs but doesn't hold one unless the customer is unquestionably old.

By extending every courtesy that she can, the hostess adds far more to the customers' enjoyment of their meals than she perhaps realizes.

**Cashier.** Ordinarily, a cashier is not expected to greet people, but many times to do so is a gracious gesture. A restau-

rant's steady patrons would think it odd if they went there day after day and received no sign of recognition when extending their checks for payment. In a bank, in an insurance office, and at the motion-picture theater it would seem ill-humored of an attendant not to smile and greet customers who appear there regularly.

In making change, accuracy is of unquestioned importance. To help prevent possible confusion, a cashier mentions the amount of the payment and the amount extended: "Seventy-five cents out of two dollars." "Four fifty-five out of ten dollars." When a bill is crisp, the thoughtful cashier will ruffle it slightly, to make sure that it is not sticking to another new bill.

It is considered discourteous, as well as an opportunity for possible error, for a cashier to slap down change without counting it out. The established procedure is as follows:

Name the amount of the payment, then the total as you put down each piece of change, until you reach the amount that was tendered originally. For example, suppose that a customer's check is \$1.39, and he gives you a five-dollar bill.

With the change from the cash register in your hand you say, "one dollar thirty-nine." Then say, "forty," as you put down a penny; "fifty," as you put down a dime; "two dollars," as you put down a half dollar; "three," as you put down a one-dollar bill; "five dollars, thank you," as you put down a two-dollar bill.

"Thank you" is said for every payment. If the amount given is correct, without the necessity of making change, "Thank you" is the response then. "Thank you very much" is instinctively the acknowledgment of large payments.

**Salesperson. Greeting.** In some stores the management prefers that a salesperson approach a customer without a greeting of any sort and wait until the customer speaks.



In other stores the feeling is that, instead of the customer's being left to look around as long as he wishes without prompting, some sort of recognition should be made. The practice varies. The customer may be greeted with a pleasant "Good morning" or "Good afternoon." He may be greeted with a slight bow and "Good morning, Sir." Sometimes the greeting is, "May I help you?" or its variation, "Is there something I may show you?" To say "C'n I help you?" is grammatically incorrect and, consequently, taboo.

*The suggestion to buy.* Successful salespeople have learned when they may properly approach a customer with even stronger suggestion to purchase. To a woman looking at a spread of costume jewelry, they may say, "Aren't these bracelets lovely?" To another woman, gazing into a showcase, they know when to open the panel and suggest, "Perhaps you'd like to see some of these evening bags?" Coming from a handsome and smiling girl in an expensive shop, the approach does not usually appear to resemble the familiar greeting from the corner grocer who shrewdly knows when to suggest, "Aren't these melons nice, Mrs. Brown?" and, "Maybe you'd like to try some of these cookies—just came in."

A salesperson has to combine his own experience, his observation of other salespeople's tactics, and a certain amount of caution, in order to be able to judge fairly accurately how far he should go in suggesting a purchase. Generally, in drug-stores and grocery stores, and in shops dealing in such special goods as books, photographers' supplies, and so on, suggestions can be continued—often with good effect—especially, when mark-down prices and special merchandise are being offered. In other stores, however—particularly, department stores—customers like to be shown attention, but they also like to feel that they are free to look around unassisted.

*Taking care of more than one customer at a time.* The manager of a store is expected to know best whether his salespeople can take care of more than one customer at a time. Generally, when a customer knows just what he wants, he should be given full attention. When, however, one is hesitating between two items, or when the article is something that has to be tried on, an adept salesman can usually take care of other customers while the first is making up his mind. Of course, this should be done in such a way that the first customer has no occasion to feel offended.

Perhaps a woman is spending considerable time trying to decide on a purchase, while other customers are kept waiting. The saleswoman may say to her, "Will you excuse me, please? I'll be back shortly," and turn to the next customer. As soon as she has finished, she turns back to her first customer, who naturally has first claim on her attention.

A salesperson is required to keep a customer in mind and in view, not only out of courtesy but because of the necessity of watching the merchandise. Unfortunately, hesitation over a purchase is one ruse of the shoplifter.

*Closing a conversation.* Anyone who has decided to make a successful selling career should cultivate the habit of closing every conversation on a friendly tone. If a sale has been made, the salesperson gives the customer his package, counts out his change, smiles, and says, "Thank you," "Thank you very much," or, "Thank you. I hope you'll come in again."

When a purchase has been large, the salesperson realizes its importance to the customer by saying, "I'm sure you're going to enjoy your coat very much, Mrs. Brown" or "That's a beautiful table and you'll find a great deal of use for it."

If no sale is made, the closing remarks are still agreeable: "I'm sorry we haven't the style you want, but we may get some in later. Why don't you try again?" "It was no trouble

at all. Any time you're looking for shoes again I'll be glad to help you." "You're very welcome." "That's perfectly all right." Such an attitude not only is a mark of good manners, but it may count toward future business.

**Doorman.** In some buildings, a doorman is stationed just inside the front door to greet customers. This is commonly the practice in furniture stores and banks, and in office buildings where the management feels that a personal reception is preferable to the usual alphabetic listing posted on the wall in black and white.

Usually an elderly employee fills this job very capably, for his long experience with the firm enables him to answer questions promptly and accurately. However, there is more to the job than knowing the location of everyone and everything. Unless a doorman keeps up his appearance with a daily shave and a spotless uniform, a firm is not represented to the best advantage. If he is stationed at a small desk near the elevator or if there are comfortable sofas available, there is no reason why he should not sit down when he has nothing to do; but when a caller comes toward him, he is expected to rise without hesitation. In some firms the management would like him to open the door whenever a caller approaches; but if fire laws stipulate that doors must open outward, it is somewhat difficult for anyone to push a heavy door and hold it without brushing by the people who are entering.

Outside doormen employed by hotels, apartment houses, and some high-priced stores are usually younger men, considered better able to work in all kinds of weather. They are stationed just outside the front entrance, ready to open automobile doors for people as they enter and leave. In rainy weather, a doorman also holds an umbrella over their heads

or shakes out a dripping umbrella for someone who has walked. Perhaps his greatest usefulness is in hailing taxicabs.

Although there is no place for an outside doorman to sit when he is not busy, it would be thoughtlessness in the extreme for anyone to object to his stepping inside the building during unpleasant weather. He can watch through the glass doors for people who are stopping, and go out quickly to receive them.

Outside a motion-picture theater, the doorman is still required to open car doors, but in addition he is required to call out at frequent intervals the availability of seats. Although information regarding the prices and the starting time may be posted at the box-office window, the doorman is expected to answer questions, no matter how frequent, in a courteous manner.

**Guide.** The opportunity to make a good impression on a caller is multiplied when a group is received. Instead of making one friend for the firm, the guide has the opportunity to make a dozen or 20 or 30 friends, depending on the size of the group that he conducts.

Their tour may take them through a series of broadcasting studios, or around a factory, or from the roof to the basement of a modern office building. The guide may be a young man or woman in uniform, giving a memorized talk, or he may be a junior executive of the firm who can be depended on to make a good impression, on short notice.

In organized travel tours, the guide is sometimes the bus driver or a college student working part-time or a married woman devoting part of her day to this outside work. The role of guide is filled by many different people and under varying circumstances, but in general the same procedure is followed.

If the guide has been called to take care of a group already

assembled, he extends the cheeriest kind of "Good morning" or "Good afternoon" in greeting. If he's wearing a cap, he tips it. He asks, "Is anyone else coming?" While he waits for the stray member who has wandered off to take pictures, he makes a few remarks about the weather, about some amusing child in the group, and any other topic of interest that occurs to him. Nothing is said about the tour until the group is all together; otherwise, late-comers may feel that they have missed something important.

At the start, people should be warned of anything that might prove disturbing to some of them, such as strong odors in a factory or the racket of a printing department. When they are prepared they are likely, when they meet the actual experience, to show how little they mind rather than to complain.

On a tour through an office building during working hours, the guests are not taken inside a private office when it is occupied. If an executive has a choice painting or a historic document that he is glad to have shown to visitors, the guide is supposed to understand about it. Nevertheless, he asks the executive's secretary for permission to take his group in if the executive happens to be out. In some firms, the president makes it a blanket rule that he be told when visiting groups are from high schools and colleges. These executives, realizing that the students' interest in seeing the machinery of business is lively and genuine, consider it worth while to invite them in for a little chat and to answer their questions.

When the guests are looking at something for the first time or are walking up and down stairs, the wise guide remains silent until he has their full attention. In approaching something of interest, or before leaving it, he makes suitable

comments or explanations: "May I call your attention to the room that we shall enter next. It contains . . ." "On your left is a display of . . ." As the tour progresses, the guide fills in long pauses with facts and statistics. "While we are waiting for the elevator, I might tell you something about this corridor. It is 900 feet long, 800 feet high, and completely lined with Afghanistan marble."

All questions from the group are answered promptly. Even when something is asked that strikes most of the crowd as absurd, the guide keeps a straight face and gives a serious answer. Whenever someone intentionally makes a humorous remark, that's different, and a guide is expected to have a good laugh with the rest.

In every position dealing with the public, a person has the chance to make friends for the firm. Such friendship is the lasting kind—the kind that makes people think of a concern pleasantly and that brings them back again and again until they never think of going elsewhere for what they need.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

✓ 1. How would you describe the right attitude for receiving customers and callers?

✓ 2. How is a caller customarily greeted in business?

✓ 3. On the following occasions, would a man stand to greet people or would he remain seated?

✓ a. He works at a desk in a large, general office. Occasional visitors come to see him.

✓ b. As a buyer, he interviews a number of salesmen each day.

✓ c. He is stationed at an information booth.

✓ d. An executive of his firm, whom he seldom sees, occasionally comes into his office to discuss matters.

On what occasions would a woman stand to greet a visitor?

✓ 4. How is a Protestant clergyman addressed? A priest? A rabbi?

5. In this chapter two cases have been given showing how experienced executives try not to keep visitors waiting. Can you think of other ways?

✓ 6. When a man is seated at his desk, what does he do when a call is over and the man who is visiting him rises to go? What does he do when the caller is a woman? When a man and a woman together visit him?

What does a woman do when the man who is visiting her starts to leave? When her visitor is another woman? When she is visited by a small group of men and women?

✓ 7. A visitor without an appointment comes to your firm and asks to see a certain executive. As receptionist, you are required by the management to find out more about the call. How would you handle this situation?

✓ 8. What little courtesies can a receptionist or a secretary extend that are always appreciated by visitors?

✓ 9. If you were a secretary, and your employer should already be engaged with a visitor in his office when a second visitor arrives, what would you do?

✓ 10. If you were a secretary, how would you direct people to your employer's office? What would you say? Would you hold the door open? Would you announce the visitor by name to your employer?

11. What is the general nature of the work of a service representative? In carrying out these duties, what should be the attitude of the service representative toward callers?

12. If you were a restaurant hostess, how would you escort customers to their places?

13. How would you count out change clearly for a customer in the following examples?

A purchase of 9 cents is made with a quarter.

A purchase of 12 cents is made with a half dollar.

A purchase of 76 cents is made with a one-dollar bill.

A purchase of 49 cents is made with a two-dollar bill.

A purchase of \$2.30 is made with a five-dollar bill.

A purchase of \$11.05 is made with a twenty-dollar bill.

14. If you were a salesperson, when and how would you take care of two customers at the same time?

15. At the direction of your instructor, some of the members of a group may be assigned the roles of customers and dramatize different types—talkative, silent, critical, flighty, those who mumble, and so on. Other members of the group may take the part of salespeople and serve these customers. These demonstrations may be worked out privately and then presented to the rest of the group for criticism.

16. These demonstrations can be extended to other types of business:

- a.* A small office with a secretary in charge, and a visitor who comes to seek information.
- b.* An office of the telephone company, where a subscriber calls on a service representative to have an extension telephone installed.
- c.* A restaurant during a busy lunch hour, with a hostess and a line of patrons.
- d.* The information counter at a railway station where the attendant has been absent for a minute and comes back, to find several people waiting.





## **6. IN THE MEDICAL OFFICE**

More than any other assistant, the woman in the medical office needs to be courteous and kind. In her work with doctors and dentists, in hospitals and clinics, she not only deals with all types of people but she sees them at their worst: despondent, nervous, frightened, worried over the cost, and in physical pain. Under these conditions, her smallest act—or omission—is magnified by a patient; and a thoughtless remark or an indifferent attitude on her part, which might be forgotten in more cheerful circumstances, only intensifies his unhappy outlook.

### **RECEPTION OF PATIENTS**

Whether a patient is making his first visit or whether he comes often, greet him with a pleasant smile. No matter how

exasperating some patients may be, they are still to be treated with sympathy.

**Helping a patient feel at ease.** Graciousness can be shown in various ways. You may include in your greeting the relative or friend who has accompanied a patient. A child's tenseness will be relieved if you talk with him for a few moments about his toys or playmates. It is even part of your job to help someone who is feeble or injured to put on or take off his coat, hand him his cane, and hold the door for him. Any little courtesy or pleasantry will help a patient's attitude and make him more receptive to treatment.

**The younger patients.** Sometimes it is not realized that the younger patients should be treated with as much courtesy as adults. A child's mother will make an appointment for him to call after school and the little fellow will be there on time but, because several women, who have come in after a shopping trip, have asked if they can't be "squeezed in," he will be forced to wait and wait, as he is too timid to say anything. If he reports his long wait to his mother, she can hardly be blamed for changing to someone else.

**Those with and without appointments.** Some doctors make no appointments but see the patients in the order of their arrival. If, however, for some urgent reason, a patient is taken ahead of his regular turn, the one who is kept waiting deserves an explanation, so that he need not feel neglected.

If you work for a doctor who sees patients only by appointment, he will tell you what to do about those who come in without either an appointment or a recommendation from another doctor. Although a doctor will generally see without an appointment anyone who has been sent by a colleague, he will, in most cases, wish an opportunity to telephone to the doctor who has sent the patient, so as to discuss the case,

before the patient is ushered in. Be guided by your employer's wishes in such a situation.

**Preventing undue talk.** Never introduce patients to each other. They are there for very personal reasons. They may, if they wish, open conversations among themselves. As long as they talk together in a cheerful vein, that's fine; but if they start telling about all sorts of similar cases where this one and that one died, or complaining how much worse they are feeling lately despite the doctor's treatments, ask one of them to go inside—into the doctor's office, if he is in the examining room; or into the examining room, while you take down the case history or advise him to remove his coat and sit comfortably while he is waiting.

When you move a patient into another room before the doctor is ready, suggest that he take along a magazine so that the waiting will be less tedious. Otherwise, he may resent being left alone with nothing to do but fuss.

#### THE BACKGROUND FOR THE RECEPTION

**The assistant's appearance.** Even if you are not a nurse, you will be required to wear a white uniform, always clean and carefully ironed. If you wear a cap, it should always be without the slightest mark or wrinkle. Shoes should be spotless and be kept in repair. Even though a doctor may sport a fine car and have a good office address, this prosperous impression before patients will be offset if his office assistant is wearing old, cracked, gray-white shoes and a uniform that needs mending or pressing.

Many doctors require an assistant to wear a hair net and to use no scented cosmetics. Chipped nail polish, twisted stocking seams, and a hair-do that needs combing—sometimes, even shampooing—are unpleasant disorders anywhere

in business, but particularly in a professional office, where the work is altogether personal. I remember the comment made by one doctor about a girl whom he had recently engaged. "She has long arms, so that she can reach things, and a good complexion: it gives her such a nice, clean look."

**Reading material.** A well-equipped table for reading material will include

Recent magazines, preferably those with short articles and jokes, not those consisting mainly of serials and stories that take some time to read

A few children's books full of pictures, unless your employer specializes in adult cases

If his clientele is made up largely of the foreign born, it is thoughtful to have at least some newspapers in their languages.

Ash trays

A doctor or a dentist usually likes to keep a supply of his cards on a small tray, placed on the reading table or on a corner of your desk. Patients can help themselves, and this is a subtle way of keeping his name noticed.

**A quiet and well-ventilated office.** As most doctors are out during the morning, this will give you an excellent chance to do any noisy work, such as typing and cleaning. If you work for a dentist, try to reserve such work for noontime, while he is at luncheon, or during a quiet part of the day when there are no patients—if ever there is such a time. Except when rush work cannot be avoided, do no typing while patients are sitting around feeling nervous, or when it can be heard by the doctor. He should not be distracted by any noise that can possibly be prevented.

Salesmen from medical-supply houses try to make their calls in the morning, because they realize that is the best time for you. Still more of your time, as well as theirs, can be

saved if you will keep a running list of items, written down as you think of them, and be all ready to place your order.

Once or twice a week, dressings and swabs will have to be sterilized. If this is done as early in the morning as possible, the steamy smell will be gone from the rooms by the time the afternoon patients start to come.

In warm weather usually all the windows can be opened without anyone's minding a draft, and in mild weather at least one window may be left open. On colder days, however, someone is sure to find an open window uncomfortable. Try to have the chairs in the reception room so arranged that there is a space in front of at least one window; then every half hour go over and open it wide for about a minute, shutting it tightly again.

This will change the air, yet no one will feel discomfort, as some might if a small amount of air were blowing on them all the time. Occasionally a visitor will complain about even the brief, necessary influx of fresh air, and then you will explain pleasantly that the window will be open for only a minute.

#### OFFICE PROCEDURE

**Outline of an average afternoon's work.** From the following general outline of an afternoon's work it can be seen that you will have a variety of tasks. You will

Receive patients

Usher them into the doctor's office or examining room

Maintain the proper atmosphere

Make, postpone, cancel, and refuse appointments

Answer the telephone

Assist the doctor or dentist in his work

Answer his buzzer

Accept payments on bills, issue receipts, verify balances

There are not likely to be many dull moments; but if there are times when no demands are being made on you, try to find some desk work that will keep you busy.

*Necessity of keeping occupied.* Having plenty of desk work will keep you from looking in the direction of the patients, even staring at them unthinkingly, and making them nervous. It will also give the impression that the doctor has a successful practice and is a very busy man, since you apparently have so much to do. It is to be hoped, however, that no other medical assistant will make such a blunder as did the one who sighed in the presence of some patients: "I'm so busy. All I've been doing lately is making out death certificates."

Another word of caution: never use this time to do your bill collecting over the telephone. That is morning work, to be accomplished when no one can overhear.

**Telephoning.** *Answering outside calls.* The telephone in the professional office is answered the same as in the general business office: "Good morning. Dr. Smith's office." When two doctors share an office, it is customary to answer, "Good morning. Capitol 4-1000." "Good morning" is changed to "Good afternoon" after 12 o'clock noon, and to "Good evening" after 6 o'clock.

Always speak in a low, unhurried tone, with sympathy and willingness—never abruptly. In no other type of office is it so important to have a soft, agreeable voice as in a professional office. Though probably without realizing it, a patient is soothed and hangs up actually feeling better.

*Before patients.* You will need to be extremely careful about all telephoning in the presence of patients, no matter how harmless it may seem. When you put in a call and ask

to speak to "Mr. Brown," anyone waiting in your office who knows Mr. Brown will also know that he is being treated by your doctor. And if your doctor is a specialist—well, that's how some stories start.

If possible, when making calls use the telephone in the doctor's office when he is in the examining room, but still speak in a low tone because some walls are unfortunately like sounding boards. Before other patients, don't telephone to a hospital to make a room reservation, giving a patient's name, diagnosis, and so on. In receiving calls, avoid calling a patient by name or otherwise letting anyone within earshot learn more than is unavoidable.

*Leaving the doctor with a woman patient.* If the telephone rings when you are in the examining room with the doctor and a woman patient, walk out as quickly as you can to answer the call, but leave the door slightly ajar behind you, as a matter of good form.

**Announcing patients.** When the doctor has someone in his office, don't go in and announce that another patient has come or is waiting. The almost inevitable impression on the first patient is that the rest of his visit will be cut short and that he will be rushed out to make way for the newcomer. Whenever it is necessary to bring in such a message, write it on a slip of paper and show it to the doctor without oral comment.

**Use of professional terms.** Your employer will expect you to learn quickly the meaning of the professional words he uses, and to use them yourself. Someone who calls the doctor for a broken bone has a "fracture." A bruise is a "contusion." In the dentist's office, a patient's tooth will have to be "removed," not pulled. His false teeth are "dentures" or "bridge-work."

Whereas most men and women in professional offices are properly careful not to make remarks before an adult patient concerning his condition, they will sometimes in the presence of a child toss around medical terms that may well prove frightening to him. At all times, children should be treated with the greatest understanding and gentleness.

**Giving directions.** When you give directions to a patient about removing clothing, waiting in a certain room, and so on, be explicit. What is familiar to you may be confusing to him, so always try to be clear. Be sure, too, that the patient understands you perfectly when you give instructions for taking medicine or exercise or changing bandages at home.

If the doctor is sending a patient to a hospital or to another doctor for further examination, ask him if he knows how to get there. He might be so disturbed that he would not think of asking you the way until he had left the office. When you give directions, make them as brief and definite as possible, even writing them on a slip of paper if you feel it necessary. Unless the patient is ill and needs a taxi, don't be quick to suggest one, for he may not care to go to that expense.

**Making appointments.** When a patient asks for an appointment, suggest a day and time when your employer will be free. If it is not convenient to the patient, suggest another time, finally setting a definite appointment. It will be well to repeat it so that there can be no possible misunderstanding. In an effort to be accommodating, don't merely say, "Oh, come in any time" or "Whenever you like." You would never say, as the assistant to a young doctor did, one day: "You can come in any time Friday afternoon. The doctor hasn't a single appointment."

The secretary to a well-known specialist makes excellent use of his printed cards. She jots down the date and time of



a patient's next appointment and hands him the card as he is leaving. He is likely, then, to carry the card with him as a reminder.

### RECORDS

**Care of case history cards.** *When working on them.* In a doctor's office, the case-history cards should be covered and the file drawers kept closed. If you are working on material at your desk and have to leave it, place a folder or a large blotter on top, or slip the work into a drawer of your desk.

*When patients make inquiries.* A patient should be told nothing about his case—not one word—unless the doctor has instructed you that such information may be given. Otherwise, if a patient appears doubtful or worried or asks to see his case card, tell the doctor. It is his responsibility to decide how much more the patient should know.

**Handling requests for information.** *From a telephone caller representing a patient's employer or an insurance company.* In answer to a telephone call from someone saying that he represents an insurance company and asking the date of an accident, an operation, or a probable date of recovery, give no information over the telephone at the time. If you know that it is all right to give him such information, say that you will call back in a few minutes.

There have been too many instances in which a curious neighbor or so-called friend of a patient has telephoned, pretending to represent an insurance company or the health department or "the firm where he works—we have employers' liability"—and has received information to satisfy undue curiosity.

*From a bona fide employer or insurance company.* When an insurance company or a patient's employer sends the doctor a blank form on which to fill out detailed information

about his case, do not furnish it until the patient has given his consent in writing. He may himself bring in the blank to be filled out, and at that time you can have him sign it as having given consent. If the company requests the information from the doctor direct, you should get in touch with the patient and ask him to come in and give written consent, or send the doctor a letter to that effect. Sometimes it will be more convenient for the employer to secure such an affidavit from the patient, if he is back at work, and to mail it to you.

If the patient refuses to have information given to the insurance company, you can explain to the company's clerk that "It is a ruling" and that the doctor will not give the information. Don't be badgered into relaxing this rule, as your first duty is to the doctor and his patient.

You would not sign a blank that is returned; the doctor signs it, although you can generally help by filling in information from the records. When you fill in a blank, be sure that all questions are answered; otherwise, the insurance company will consider the report unsatisfactory. A delay in payment of the claim may result, and this would often work a hardship on a patient. Since prompt acknowledgment of all communications in business is a true mark of office etiquette, try to have blanks filled in, signed, and returned as promptly as possible to the companies.

*From a patient's relative.* If someone calls, in person or by telephone, saying that he is a relative of the patient, generally you must not give information. If the call is from husband or wife, parent, son, or daughter—anyone as close as that—be guided by your doctor's wishes as you will learn them from working with him. Many doctors prefer to have their secretaries say something like the following:

"I'm afraid I don't know. I'll have to ask Dr. Smith and call you back," then speak to the doctor when he's not too busy.

or

"I'm sorry I haven't that information here now. If you will come in with (the patient) I may be able to help you."

A doctor mentioned a recent experience that justifies the exercise of such discretion.

Among the doctor's patients was a young man who had been seriously ill and who, though better, had to undergo weekly treatments.

One day the doctor received a telephone call from a young woman explaining that she was his sister and was anxious to know how soon her brother would be completely well. The doctor told her that if she would come to his office with her brother he would talk with them both, but he would give no information over the telephone.

She came to the office, but alone, so the doctor still refused to give her any information until her brother came with her.

The next time the young man came for his treatment, the doctor mentioned the sister's call, and the answer was, "I have no sister."

The doctor described the visitor, and you can imagine the young man's indignation when he realized that she was his girl friend.

#### ADVANCEMENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL MAN'S INTERESTS

**Advertising through the mail.** Since a professional man cannot advertise in the way that a commercial firm can, every opportunity must be utilized for discreet advertising.

When payments come through the mail, send a thank-you letter with the receipt. This not only repeats the doctor's name, but it expresses appreciation of the payment, and that

builds good will. If this is a partial payment, leaving a balance still unpaid, to enclose a receipt with the thank-you letter is a tactful way of reminding the patient of the balance.

Many doctors prefer that the return address on their envelopes shall consist of just street and number, city and state—a two-line return address:

413 Center Street  
Hometown, Ohio

If the location is a doctors' building, the suite number should precede the address.

One doctor has suggested that the omission of the name has been brought about through the wishes of the patients themselves, for he is certain that every doctor has been asked at times to send mail in a plain envelope, or at least one without the "Dr." designation. This automatically indicates that post cards should not be used. An envelope should enclose a reminder that a patient has not had his teeth examined for 6 months, an announcement of summer clinic hours, or a new office address.

**Advertising through silence.** It is excellent advertising for a professional man to have an assistant who never tells any one anything. No matter how insignificant the incident or how astounding the story, the wise assistant knows that it is not to be mentioned. She leaves everything relating to her work in the office where it belongs, and never reports any of it for the amusement of her family, her friends, or the other doctors' secretaries during lunch.

It should never even be mentioned to a patient that another member of his family has called to see the doctor. A patient undergoing treatment may not want his relatives to be worried about him, so it should be his privilege to tell them about his visits if he wishes them to know.

Criticism of other doctors, dentists, hospitals, and clinics only acts as a boomerang. In the first place, it is criticism of the entire medical-dental profession, of which the story teller is a member. Then, too, people may think an assistant has some reason to feel unsure of her employer's standing if she gives evidence of jealousy of his associates.

**Guarding his private life.** The private life of any employer, whether a doctor or not, should never be discussed; but anyone working for a doctor must be particularly careful. His relationship to his patients is much more individual than that of a storekeeper to his customers. Whereas no one cares whether a storekeeper has been married three times, everyone is interested in knowing whether the bachelor doctor has a girl friend.

A safe rule is to say nothing. If a question is asked, it is perfectly right to pretend ignorance by answering, "Why, I don't know" or "I don't believe I know," while to those who are boldly insistent, the answer might be "I've never thought to ask him."

**Necessity of courteous treatment.** Ethics and etiquette so overlap in the professional office that it is difficult to know where one ends and the other begins. An assistant needs to be secretive, just as she would if she were keeping the books in a manufacturing plant or if she were the personnel director in a bank. Her obligation to maintain secrecy is even stronger here. Her employer is dealing with the innermost private affairs of persons. Life and death are involved. As custodian of case histories, as the recipient of facts from the lips of the patients themselves, the professional assistant is bound by the unwavering rules of ethics to guard her work in strictest confidence.

In all her duties, the assistant in a medical office is required to exercise such courtesy and tact as are necessary in every

business contact, only here they are of greater value and importance. She is not merely polite to patients, but also sympathetic and anxious to be of service. She encourages their confidence in her employer by acting in a respectful manner toward him at all times. She pays attention to such little things as keeping the reading table dusted and the ash trays emptied, so that visitors can have no reason to start wondering whether the instruments are sterilized.

The little acts of etiquette, day after day, when added together build the good will that is the backbone of every professional practice.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why are patients different from the usual office visitors?
2. As a medical assistant, how would you show the right attitude toward patients?
3. What details of good grooming would you observe in order to make the best possible impression on patients? Give several reasons why it is important to be so careful.
4. In how many ways can you help make the atmosphere of the reception room quiet and pleasant and still get all your work done in time?
5. When patients are in the waiting room with you, what care must you take in telephoning?
6. A child is brought in by his mother for an examination. What consideration would you show toward the child?
7. How can you help make it easier for a patient to understand and remember what he is told, under the following circumstances?
  - a. When he is given a future appointment by the dentist, and he is known from previous experience to have a poor memory.
  - b. When he is given directions by the doctor about the frequency of changing dressings at home.

8. How should you guard the information on a patient's case history card

- a. From the eyes of others?
- b. From the patient himself?

9. What consideration are you expected to exercise in keeping confidential all information about a patient, while at the same time doing nothing that could be considered discourteous in the slightest way?

- a. In dealing with a telephone call purporting to come from an insurance company, when you do not recognize the caller's voice.
- b. In answering questions from a member of the patient's family.

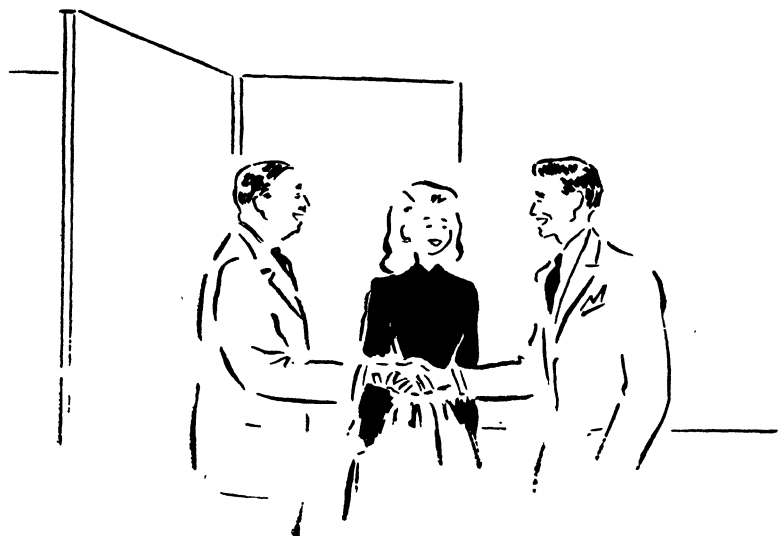
10. How does the professional man combine the practice of etiquette with advertising through the mail?

11. How is advertising achieved through tactful silence?

12. As a medical assistant, how would you answer people who are inquisitive about the professional contacts and the personal life of the man for whom you work?

13. Several members of a group may assume the role of patients in a doctor's office: some feeble, one in a hurry to get back to his work, a young child with her mother. Another member may take the part of the medical assistant and receive them.

14. The reception of patients may be demonstrated again, with another group taking the parts. This time the assistant's patience may be tested with interruptions: the doctor's buzzer sounds, the telephone rings, a patient asks that a member of his family be telephoned to come and take him home, someone pays a bill, and so on.



## **7. HOW TO MAKE INTRODUCTIONS**

In the apparent simplicity of a graceful introduction there is no evidence at first sight of the various acts of courtesy that are involved. Each name is pronounced clearly, so that people really will know whom they are meeting. They are presented to each other in an established sequence that shows that they are considered ladies and gentlemen. As they are made acquainted, they are given a clue to each other's identity, so that they will not be at a loss about starting a conversation together.

Above all, the people who are being introduced give their undivided attention and, for at least one instant in even the busiest day, they are wholly interested in each other.

### **FORMS FOR MAKING INTRODUCTIONS**

Forms for making introductions are varied, but the requirements do not change. A gentleman is introduced to a



lady, except that the procedure is reversed when he is president of a country, a member of royalty, or a dignitary of the church. In all other cases it makes no difference whether the gentleman is elderly and prominent and the lady very young and known to very few people—he is still introduced *to* her.

When both persons are of the same sex, the younger person is introduced to the one who is older or more distinguished. If there is no such difference, either one may be presented to the other.

The term “may I present” is used on the most formal occasions, as at the reception held for a speaker and head-table guests before a luncheon or dinner, or at a large business gathering when a guest is made acquainted with a distinguished guest of honor. At such an event, introductions might be made as follows:

“Mr. Brown, may I present Mr. Jones?”

“Miss Brown, may I present Mr. Smith?”

“Miss Brown, may I present Judge Smith?”

“Judge Smith, may I present Mr. Jones?”

“Miss Brown, may I present Senator Smith?”

“Senator Smith, may I present Mr. Jones?”

The formality diminishes for other business introductions. Possible variations are

“Miss Brown, may I introduce Mr. Smith?”

“Miss Brown, I should like to introduce Mr. Smith.”

“Miss Brown, Mr. Smith.”

“Mr. Jones, Mr. Smith.”

“Miss Brown, this is Mr. Smith.”

“Mr. Jones, this is Mr. Smith.”

If you should happen to speak the gentleman’s name first, you can still introduce him to the lady by changing the forms around, in some such way as

"Mr. Smith, may I present you to Miss Brown?"

"Mr. Smith, may I introduce you to Miss Brown?"

"Mr. Smith, I should like to introduce you to Miss Brown."

To introduce two people to a third person, the same procedure as for single introductions is followed. In the following examples let us suppose that you want Mr. Thompson to meet two people who are together.

"Mr. Jones, Mr. Thompson." (pause) "Mr. Smith."

"Miss Jones, Mr. Thompson." (pause) "Mr. Smith."

"Mr. Thompson, may I introduce you to Miss Jones" (pause) "and Miss Smith?"

There are still further ways of making introductions, which would not apply in the majority of situations, but which sometimes fit a situation perfectly. For instance, in showing a new employee his job, you may feel quite sure that he has already met a certain employee with whom he is to work; or you may have occasion to introduce your secretary to someone whom she probably already knows because of his previous visits. The following examples suggest how these may be worded:

"Mr. Johnson, have you met Miss Green?"

"Miss Green, you have met Miss Jones, haven't you?"

"Mr. Jones, do you know Mr. Smith?"

"Mr. Jones, do you know Miss Brown?"

"Miss Brown, you know Miss Green, don't you?"

When people are introduced again in this way, they smile and say, "Oh, yes, we've met before" or "Yes, I've met Miss Brown."

If the two people had not met previously, they might say, "No, I'm afraid we haven't met. How do you do, Miss Green," or "I'm not sure that we have. How do you do, Mr. Smith."

**The exceptions.** The exceptions to the usual procedure for making introductions, as mentioned early in this chapter, are as follows:

*When introducing someone to the President of the United States*

“Mr. President, I have the honor to present Mr. Smith of Philadelphia.”

“Mr. President, I have the honor to present Miss Brown of Chicago.”

“Of Chicago” is added because some identification is used on official occasions, although it is not considered necessary on social occasions.

*When introducing someone to the president of another country or to a member of royalty*

The introduction is likely to be made either by a member of our diplomatic service or by a resident of the particular foreign country, who would know the formality required in each case.

*When introducing someone to a dignitary of the church*

“Your Eminence, may I present Mr. Smith?” “Bishop Thompson, may I present Miss Smith?” “Dr. Wise, may I present Miss Smith?” are examples of the use of the form “may I present,” when used for introducing someone to a dignitary of the church. Although established usage requires that a lady be presented only to a “high church official,” it is a mark of respect to include priests, ministers, rabbis, and others occupying less prominent positions, when they are elderly.

A list of titles by which to address members of the clergy is given on page 83 of the chapter Receiving Customers and Callers, under the subject, "How people with titles are addressed."

#### PUTTING PEOPLE AT EASE

**Helping a conversation along.** In business, even more than in social life, it is helpful to give two people whom you introduce some bit of information that will make their identity known; for example:

"Miss Brown, Mr. Smith. Miss Brown is taking Miss Thompson's place in the sales department."

"Miss Brown, this is Mr. Smith. Miss Brown is one of our designers."

"Mr. Jones, this is Mr. Smith of the General Company."

"Mr. Jones, do you know Mr. White of our Boston office?"

In cases when this has not been done, there have been many instances when someone has said later, with some irritation, "Oh, I wish I had known he was from the home office. There was a lot we could have talked over" or "Was that the Miss Brown who arranged our tour? I wish I had known, so I could have thanked her."

**Introducing the new employee.** When a new employee is to work with a group in which the people call one another by their first names, it helps put him at ease if he is introduced by his full name, in some informal manner such as

"John, this is Ed Smith. John Jones. Ed is going to be with us after school during the Christmas season."

"Mildred, I should like to introduce Fred Green, our new stock clerk. Mildred Smith, my assistant. Mildred will be able to help you a great deal in learning where things are kept."

"Philip, you have met Bill Brown, haven't you? Since Philip takes care of all the mail orders, I'm going to suggest

that you boys work together for a couple of days. Then you'll be able to help us out, Bill, when vacations start."

### GROUP INTRODUCTIONS

To make a newcomer acquainted with a group, introductions are made to two or three persons at a time. If all the names are reeled off without a pause, the lone stranger is hardly able to identify any member of the group correctly afterward. A more satisfactory way of meeting the situation is suggested here.

Suppose that Mr. Jones has come to a meeting to be held in your office. He knows none of the others already there. You greet him by shaking hands, probably saying, "Glad you could come" or "It's good to see you," if he is from outside the firm. If you see each other frequently in the course of your work within the same firm, however, you greet him with a nod and, perhaps, "Hello, Bill."

Turning toward Miss A and Mr. B, who are near you, say, "Miss A, Mr. Jones." Wait for them to acknowledge their introduction, and then continue, "Mr. B." Since there is no doubt that Mr. B heard Mr. Jones's name when you first said it, there is no need to repeat it so soon afterward. Look around the room and continue, "Miss C" (pause) "Mr. D" (pause) "Mr. E, Mr. Jones."

You may vary the introductions by saying, "My secretary Miss A, Mr. Jones," or, "Mr. E, I believe you've already heard of Mr. Jones through your dealings with The American Company."

If the visitor is a woman, she may be introduced as follows:

"Miss Jones, my secretary Miss A" (pause) "Mr. B" (pause) "Miss C, Miss Jones" (pause) "Mr. D" (pause) "Mr. E."

Miss C is introduced after Mr. B, in this illustration. We have assumed that she is farther away in the room, probably

talking with Mr. D and Mr. E. To call her name out with Miss A's name would sound more like an army sergeant at roll call than a business executive making a gracious group introduction.

Sometimes it is unnecessary for a newcomer to meet everyone in a group individually. Perhaps a salesman is invited to demonstrate his machine to a group of department managers, brought together for an informal meeting. Or someone besides the regular leader of a training class is to give a lecture.

The person in charge of the group keeps such an introduction as brief as possible, so that the invited speaker will be allowed to make the greatest use of the time allotted to him. In presenting him, it has been found that the phrase, "I should like to introduce" is a better choice than the very formal "May I present." The following are suitable forms of introduction for such an occasion.

"I should like to introduce Mr. Smith to you. Mr. Smith represents the Automatic Company, makers of the Automatic printing machine."

or

"Now that we have come to the subject of auto insurance, I should like to introduce to you the head of our auto sales department, Mr. John Jones. Mr. Jones will discuss all forms of coverage provided by our company."

For introducing the president of the firm to a training class when he makes his speech of welcome, reference can be made to Chapter 18, pages 369 to 370.

#### INTRODUCING ONE'S SELF

At a business luncheon or dinner, guests are generally provided with badges on which they write their names for any-

one to see. When such means of identification are not provided, you may find yourself seated next to strangers and wonder if you should introduce yourself at once or wait to be asked for your name.

Guests brought together in this way are not required to know each other before speaking. However, there are many who feel uncomfortable carrying on a conversation with anyone without knowing his name; therefore, they introduce themselves at once. For the other person not to take the hint and introduce himself, too, would be bordering on rudeness. A man is likely to say to the person next to him, "By the way, my name is Smith. I'm with the General Company." The neighbor to whom he has spoken may say in reply, "Oh, I know your company well. I'm with American Brothers. My name is Jones." A woman introduces herself at such a business-social affair as "Miss Brown."

On another occasion, Mr. Smith may be seated next to someone whom he has met before or he may be standing near him at a business gathering. It would be unbecoming for a grown person to be turning sidelong glances toward his neighbor, debating whether or not to take the initiative. He should speak up, recalling the previous meeting and making a self-introduction if the other person's memory is less reliable than his own. It is simple enough to say, "Aren't you Mr. Johnson of Consolidated? I met you last winter when I visited your Chicago office. I'm Williams, of Crown Mutual."

#### ACKNOWLEDGING AN INTRODUCTION

The response to an introduction is "How do you do." As you speak, you show your courtesy by looking straight into the face of the person to whom you are being introduced and smiling pleasantly. In business, one often will add to his greeting the name of the person to whom he has been intro-

duced: "How do you do, Mr. Smith." It not only lends a touch of friendliness in a businesslike atmosphere, but when a person has pronounced the name himself, he will be more likely to remember it afterward.

On being introduced to a group, a gentleman may vary his acknowledgments by simply repeating some of the names, or by bowing to the ladies without speaking to them. A bow of this type is a modification of the deeper bow that a person gives in response to an audience's applause when he speaks in public. In acknowledging the introduction, a gentleman in an easy manner bends ever so slightly from the hips and the neck.

Let us suppose that you are the Mr. Jones who is being introduced to a group, in the way described under the heading, Group Introductions. To Miss A you say, "How do you do." You repeat Mr. B's name as you shake hands: "Mr. B." To Miss C you bow slightly. You repeat Mr. D's name as you shake hands: "Mr. D." You shake hands with Mr. E and say, "How do you do."

When it is Miss Brown who is being introduced to the group, she may vary her acknowledgments by repeating some of the names and by bowing to gentlemen, as well as to other ladies. A lady bows by inclining her head slightly, as she smiles.

**When the occasion calls for special friendliness.** If you have been looking forward to a certain introduction, or if you have been carrying on a lengthy business correspondence with someone and have begun to feel that you almost know him, you will probably want to make your acknowledgment even warmer than usual. Instead of "How do you do," there are other greetings, which may be given such emphasis that their cordiality is unmistakable: "Oh, Mr. Jones, I'm so glad



to meet you," or, "I've been wanting to meet you, Miss Brown." Circumstances may suggest still other greetings, such as, "I'm so glad that you could come to our spring showing, Mr. Smith," or, "I'm so glad that we've finally met, after all our correspondence."

On being introduced to an employee who has been newly hired by your firm, you can do much to make him feel welcome by saying, "How do you do, Mr. Johnson. I hope you're going to like it here," or, "I'm so glad to meet you, Miss Brown. I heard that you were going to join us in this territory," or, "How do you do, Miss Jones. So you're going to be in this office? If I can help you in any way, I hope you won't hesitate to ask me."

**Shaking hands.** Gentlemen always shake hands when they are introduced to one another, but a gentleman waits for a lady to extend her hand. If, however, he should happen to offer his hand first, a lady is quick to acknowledge his well-meant gesture by extending her hand immediately.

A lady may or may not offer to shake hands upon being introduced. She is quite likely to do so when being introduced to either a gentleman or another lady with whom she already has common interests. In business these interests might result from correspondence, the similarity of their work, or the fact that they have heard of each other through a common friend.

**When to stand.** A gentleman always rises when he is introduced, whether it be to a lady or to another gentleman. A lady stands when she is introduced to a member of the clergy, to women who are somewhat older, when she shakes hands with a gentleman who is very much older, and on being introduced at any other time when she is prompted by natural impulse.

## ON PARTING

Generally, when an occasion has not required two people to say more than "How do you do," while others carried on the conversation, there is nothing for them to say to each other on leaving, but a pleasant "Good-by, Mr. Smith" and "Good-by, Miss Brown."

When there has been some slight conversation, the remark "I'm so glad to have met you" may or may not be spoken. However, if one is genuinely glad to have met a person and says so, the other person answers with a smile, "Thank you."

Two people who have had an especially interesting conversation may feel, upon leaving each other, like saying, "Good-by, Miss Brown, I'm so glad to have met you," and "I'm so glad to have met you, too." If Miss Brown says, "Good-by, Mr. Smith, I hope I shall see you again sometime," he will probably answer, "I hope so, too." The most sincere and cordial remarks, of course, are those that come to mind naturally and spontaneously.

## LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION

With the resumption of travel to foreign countries on business matters, Americans find letters of introduction useful again; for, while people with similar interests can rely in this country on luncheon dates arranged through common friends, and on self-introductions at conventions and meetings, in a foreign land these contacts are lacking. When a businessman hears that a friend is going to Brazil, for instance, he may say to him, "By the way, let me know when you're going and I'll give you a letter or two of introduction. Our office has a few contacts in Rio de Janeiro."

Such an offer is definite enough for a traveler to follow up and ask for letters of introduction when he is making final

preparations to leave. He may make his request by telephone or at luncheon, if he sees the other person fairly often. Otherwise, a written request is generally considered more courteous.

Dear Mr. Jones:

At the Ad Club luncheon a few weeks ago you told me that, should I go to South America, you would give me letters of introduction to friends in Rio de Janeiro.

Early next month I expect to start on a trip to Brazil and Argentina to establish distribution of the company's products. My plans at present call for a stay of about four months in each country, so I shall certainly enjoy the opportunity to meet the people you have in mind.

With deep appreciation of your offer, I remain,

Cordially yours,

As for writing the letter of introduction itself, the following samples show some of the ways in which such a letter may be worded.

From a businessman to his firm's branch office:

Dear Mr. Brown:

This letter will introduce Mr. John R. Smith, sales manager for The Universal Associates and a member of the Ad Club.

Universal is opening up sales connections in Brazil and Argentina, so Mr. Smith expects to be in your country for several months.

Since this is Mr. Smith's first visit to South America, I have told him that you will probably be able to give him the names of some firms with which to do business. His company, like our own, manufactures a very high-grade piece of

equipment, and its plant, I understand, is now prepared to fill foreign orders within the same short space of time in which it is filling local orders.

I know from previous experience how sound your judgment has been, so any help that you can give Mr. Smith will be deeply appreciated.

With kind personal regards to you and Mrs. Brown, I remain,

Cordially yours,

From the owner of a firm to a client in another country:

Dear Mr. Green:

This letter will be presented to you by Mr. William R. Thompson, president of Thompson & White.

Mr. Thompson has been a customer of ours for many years, doing business with us since we were in our first location on North Street. He is now making a trip to Montreal, with a view toward the possible establishment of a branch office.

Mr. Thompson knows something about your city from occasional vacation trips in the past, but since this is the first time he has gone as a businessman and not as a tourist, he would like to know more about business conditions. If you can help him with current information about your local problems and possibilities as they might affect his maintenance of a branch office, we would appreciate this favor very much indeed.

Sincerely yours,

A letter of introduction is placed in an addressed envelope, left unsealed, and given to the bearer. After he has read the letter, the bearer may seal the envelope or not, as he chooses. To present the letter, he calls at the office of the person to

whom it is addressed and sends in his business card with the letter.

Although a certain amount of formality exists in the making of introductions, whether by letter or in person, in business or in social life, there is an overtone of friendliness that every thoughtful person tries to inject when making people acquainted with one another. Instead of leaving them to carry on by themselves after nothing more than a recital of names, anyone responsible for bringing people together should make an introduction in such a way that it has every chance of being remembered and of stimulating a lasting friendship.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. What various acts of courtesy enter into the making of an introduction?

✓2. Under what circumstances would a person introduce one's self? How would a man do it? A woman?

✓3. In the following situations, how much would you say about a person when you introduce him?

- a. He is a visitor from one of your firm's branch offices.
- b. She has been engaged to conduct a survey.
- c. He is from a company with which your company has close business relations.
- d. She is secretary to a well-known executive of the firm.
- e. He is going to work part-time after school.
- f. She is going to demonstrate an office machine manufactured by her firm.

4. What are the rules governing the order in which introductions are made?

✓5. What form for making an introduction is used

- a. On the most formal occasions in business?
- b. For business introductions in general?
- c. When the people whom you are introducing may have met already?

6. How does a man acknowledge an introduction to another man? To a lady? How can he vary his acknowledgments?

✓7. How does a lady acknowledge an introduction to another lady? To a man? How can she vary her acknowledgments?

✓8. When do people shake hands?

✓9. When do people stand on being introduced?

✓10. What purpose is served by the letter of introduction?

11. Make a list of introductions that you have had to make and tell how you handled them.

12. The following demonstrations can be made with classmates, outside friends, or members of your family.

*a.* Introduce two people to each other.

*b.* Introduce them to a third person.

*c.* Assume that these three are business associates of yours, waiting in your office for a meeting to be held. Introduce them to a fourth person, who is supposed to have come to the meeting from another firm and who does not know anyone present except you.

*d.* Introduce a newly hired employee to other employees.

*e.* Assume that you and one of your friends in the group have been carrying on a friendly business correspondence for several months. You finally meet at a convention. How would you be likely to greet each other? What would you probably say on parting?



## **8. FOR THOSE WHO VISIT OFFICES**

The occasions are numerous when one must call at an office in person. The job applicant, for instance, cannot hope to be hired, sight unseen. The salesman can depend only so far on the mails and on taking orders over the telephone. Businessmen and businesswomen in a variety of occupations are engaged in projects that require them to deal with people at first hand. Naturally, they desire to conduct their visits with all the smoothness possible—an aim that calls for a consideration of various problems.

### **SEEKING AN APPOINTMENT**

One problem frequently faced by a visitor is that of trying to decide whether to seek an appointment before calling on someone, or to go directly to the person's office and ask to see

him. Sometimes it is efficient to telephone first; at other times that seems presumptuous.

In general, it has been found to be preferable to seek an appointment in situations like the following:

1. A salesman already knows his customer personally.
2. A job applicant has been referred to someone by a third person.
3. Someone has had previous pleasant business dealings with the person he wants to see.
4. A caller has the name of a third person, which he can use as reference in selling his product or service.
5. There are occasions of all types where two people are engaged in work that requires them to get together for conferences. Although one of them may hold a relatively higher position in business than the other holds, it will be found time saving for them both if they arrange their meetings by appointment.

On the other hand, salesmen have found it better to try to see a new prospect in person first than to risk a telephone request for an appointment. Nothing takes the starch out of a contact like a voice at the other end of the wire countering with, "As long as you're on the phone, why don't you describe your product now?"

**Setting the time.** When seeking an appointment, you don't necessarily have to offer largely, "I can come any time." As a matter of fact, few people in business have a schedule so elastic. Before telephoning, however, have in mind all the possible days and times that are open for you, so that you will be ready to offer as wide a choice as possible.

"I can call any day after 2 o'clock."

"I'm in your city every Tuesday and Friday."

With two possible exceptions, described below, the priv-



ilege of definitely setting the time is to be left to the one who will grant the favor of an appointment.

*Exception 1.* When seeking an appointment for which you will pay a fee—as to see a doctor, dentist, hairdresser, and so on—you are in a better position to state exactly when you prefer to call. Instead of a businessman's saying, "I can call any day after 2 o'clock," when he telephones to his dentist, he is more likely to say, "I can get away around 2 o'clock on some days. What have you open?"

*Exception 2.* If you are a salesman covering a wide territory, you may find that a certain amount of definiteness is allowable, if it is used with discretion.

Every night, one salesman makes a list of the customers he hopes to see the following day in the next city on his route. Then he sends Western Union night letters to these customers, somewhat as follows: "Will call on you about eleven o'clock [a different time for each customer]. Have new product to show you." (Or "Have something of interest to show you," or "Have new discount plan to tell you about"—whatever approach can be made in all truthfulness). "Will appreciate your courtesy in seeing me."

**Using names of customers as references.** As for using the name of a customer for reference when seeking an appointment with a prospect, you must take care that the customer agrees fully to the use of his name. For instance, a salesman might suggest to a new customer at the close of a sale, "Perhaps some of your friends would like to know about this machine, Mr. Brown?" or, "This attachment is so new, I don't believe many people have heard about it. If you know of anyone who'd be interested, I'd be glad to see him ahead of my other calls." Then, when a name or names have been secured, the salesman adds, "And it will be all right if I mention your name?"

Occasionally a customer will be willing to supply some very good leads but will not care to have his name used, so a salesman's care to learn just where he stands in this matter will avert any misunderstanding regarding it.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ON TIME

Not only is it good manners for a caller to be on time for an appointment, but it ensures him a good reception. The late-comer who strolls in at a quarter to three for a 2:30 appointment is likely to learn that Mr. Smith is busy now with another caller and won't be free for the rest of the day. Even when Mr. Smith's secretary pretends to believe the caller's lame excuse for his lateness and gives him another appointment, the caller will still be faced with the prospect of making his apologies to Mr. Smith when he finally does see him.

To be sure of keeping an appointment on time, it has been found best in big cities to allow from 10 to 15 minutes in addition to the amount of time that a trip would ordinarily take. Delays by traffic, bad weather, and slow elevator service consume a surprising amount of time. In less congested localities and where the distances between buildings are not great, it is well to allow for about 5 minutes' leeway.

When something occurs that will *prevent you from keeping an appointment altogether*, you are expected to telephone at once and give your reason—either to the person with whom you have the appointment or to his secretary. You will have a far better chance of securing another appointment than you will if you call up after the hour when you were expected.

When you know that you will be delayed at all—even for only a few minutes—telephone to the person's secretary and explain the delay. When you arrive, make your explanation

to the person with whom you had the appointment, just in case his secretary may not have bothered to explain so short a delay; her boss will probably have noticed your lateness, even though he may not have mentioned it.

In the chapter, *When You Look For a Job*, information is given on pages 226 and 227 on telephoning for an appointment, and on pages 241 to 246 on writing a letter of application in an effort to secure an appointment for an interview.

In the chapter, *Secretaries Have Asked Me*, the initial appointment to be made with a decorating concern is explained under the heading, "Management of an Employer's Household."

#### IN THE WAITING ROOM

People don't realize that they are often under close scrutiny the moment they enter a waiting room. The way they act toward the receptionist, their posture as they sit waiting, and their attitude toward the other callers are often observed by someone in the firm whose opinion counts. The job applicant may have no idea that the employer he hopes to impress is watching him through the half-open door of his office or that the switchboard operator who greets him has been asked by the employment manager to give him a woman's reaction to each applicant.

Especially vulnerable to observation is the salesman who visits offices. Whether he realizes it or not, the choice of his product is often determined by the way he impresses others.

**In conversation with the receptionist.** The receptionist who asks each visitor his name, and whether or not he has an appointment, does so because she has to and not because of an inquisitive nature. Experienced business people know this and they are ready with the required information, without

the slightest thought that they should resent such questioning.

When a caller is not sure whom it would be best for him to see, he will find it well to explain his call to the receptionist and leave it to her to direct him to the right person in the firm. For him to insist on knowing the names of the president, the general manager, and so on, with an explanation of their authority, usually elicits from a receptionist answers too vague to help a caller decide which official he should see.

A caller generally has occasion to say, "Thank you" to a receptionist. He does so when she tells him that he may go in, when she explains a person's absence and provides the name of someone else in the firm who will take care of him, or when she makes an appointment for him to see someone at a later date. As in all business contacts, the way is made pleasant when people will help and when those they help will show their appreciation.

**Occasions when a man removes his hat.** If the "waiting room" is only the firm's lobby, a man is not required to remove his hat as he enters. However, on approaching a woman receptionist, secretary, switchboard operator, information clerk—whoever is employed to take care of callers—a man always removes his hat before speaking and keeps it off during the conversation. He does not remove his hat when speaking to a man attendant.

When, however, the waiting room is actually a special room for waiting, with chairs and magazines, a man always removes his hat upon entering and keeps it off as long as he is in the room.

**When a caller has to wait.** A caller who has to wait is expected to do his share toward making the waiting room pleasant for others. If the ventilation is poor he doesn't smoke. If he's not reading and others are trying to, he doesn't

sit by the only lamp. He leaves the magazines stacked on a table and not in his lap.

Although a caller may not mean to deprive anyone else of a chair, he will sometimes thoughtlessly drape his coat and hat over one chair while he occupies another. As he becomes engrossed in reading, he doesn't realize that another caller has to stand. When there is no coat rack, a caller is expected to hold his own belongings and take them with him when he goes inside an office.

Salesmen who frequently see one another in their calls on the same firms are likely to sit and talk together when they meet in a waiting room. Not only does this help pass the time agreeably, but it shows a friendliness between competitors, which a few years ago was less evident in business.

**When there is no attendant.** In firms where there is no attendant, it is left to the callers to act fairly and take their turns. If anyone should attempt unfairly to get into an office ahead of others who have been waiting their proper turns, he should be given a polite little reminder—"Excuse me, but I was here ahead of you."

Another situation that may arise when there is no one in charge is this. You may start to go into an office, thinking that the person you wish to see is alone there. If you find that he is not, the only apology you need to make is, "Excuse me"; then step right out again and wait. When the other visitor comes out and you go in, say, "I'm sorry, I didn't know you were busy."

#### CALLING ON AN INDIVIDUAL

The same rules of office etiquette are observed by callers, whether the person they come to see is an individual in a private office or one who is located at a desk in a large general area.

When a man has not already had occasion to remove his hat after entering the building, he is finally required to do so on approaching the desk of the person he wishes to see. Women callers, as well as men, put out their cigarettes in an ash tray in the waiting room or the lobby before going inside.

A caller remains standing until he is offered a chair. As he takes the one that is indicated for him he says, "Thank you." He avoids placing anything on top of a person's desk. A man can rest his hat on a near-by chair, but he may want to keep his brief case or other items in his lap for ready reference. A woman caller always keeps her handbag in her lap.

Sometimes it is necessary for a caller to borrow a pen, perhaps to fill out an application blank or to sign his name to a paper. Before picking up the pen from anyone's desk the borrower always asks if he may use it. This is true of anything else on a desk. If a caller has need of a paper clip or rubber band, or even if he only needs to use a pencil to jot down something, he asks for it and never helps himself without that courtesy.

A caller should feel free to accept a cigarette if one is offered to him and if he feels like smoking, except that women job applicants have found it to their advantage to decline, with a pleasant, "No, thank you." Employers complain so much about the time that girls waste in the rest room over cigarettes that they are sometimes prejudiced against the girl who appears to be ready to smoke at every opportunity. When a caller is sure that the person he is visiting does not object to smoke in his office, he may offer a cigarette. Otherwise, he waits until the occupant of the office suggests that he may smoke.

One of the hardest restraints for a caller to practice is to keep his eyes away from papers on top of a desk. He hasn't the slightest wish to see what's written on the papers, yet

unless he makes a real effort to keep his eyes averted, he will probably find himself glancing at them. But the real test of his manners will come if he is left alone for a few minutes while the person he is visiting steps out of the office. If he gazes determinedly out the window or at a picture on the opposite wall, a caller may be bored, but at least he won't be guilty of reading other people's mail.

Anyone who is looking for a job or starting out on a selling career may find it a little difficult to be at ease in a strange office. He knows that he should relax, but that may be hard to do when he's worrying about what impression he may be making.

If he has done all his planning and preparing before leaving home, he will have little left to worry and distract him, once he's out making his calls. If his wardrobe has been made ready, to the last stitch and pressing, his qualifications for a job have been gone over carefully in his mind, every one of his sales arguments has been rehearsed again and again, he will be able to go out with a genuinely cheerful expression and with a ready smile, which is the best of open sesames.

#### ON LEAVING

The salesman, the job applicant, the reporter, the visitor from out of town—everyone who is accorded someone else's time and attention during business hours—should express his appreciation before he leaves.

The salesman might close his call by saying, "Thank you very much, Mr. Brown, for seeing me," or, "Thank you, Mr. Brown, for giving me the opportunity to describe the such-and-such machine." He knows that, even if he can't make a sale on every call, he can make a friend. The job applicant will find suggested methods of expressing his thanks on page 239 of Chapter 11.

"Thank you for your time" can be expressed in a variety of ways. The exact wording is unimportant; what counts is the sincerity with which it is said. A caller not only thanks the person who has taken the time to see him, but he nods and says, "Thank you," as he passes the secretary who had admitted him. Few, perhaps, have any idea what a favorable impression they make by this little act of courtesy.

#### WITHIN YOUR OWN COMPANY

When you call at the office of someone in your own company and the door is closed, ask the secretary seated outside the office if you may go in. If you have an appointment, you need only to ask, "All right if I go in? Mr. Smith is expecting me," but this at least gives Mr. Smith's secretary the chance to ask you to wait a moment if her boss is talking on the telephone.

When there is no secretary in attendance and you do not hear the person talking on the telephone or with another visitor, you will have to use your own judgment about knocking on the door. If you have never visited the person before, you will no doubt instinctively rap lightly before entering. However, what you intend as an act of courtesy may prove irritating to some people, so when you know from previous experience that it would be preferable for you to enter without hesitation, do so.

If the person you are calling on can be heard talking on the telephone, he should not be disturbed by your entering before he has finished. If he is talking with someone in his office, you can be guided by the circumstances. Generally when a person is dictating or talking with someone else who is within the firm, it is all right for you to enter, especially if you have only a brief message to give. However, unless an



interruption is necessary at that particular moment, it shows consideration on your part to wait until the person is free.

If you are in a large firm with many floors of offices, it is a good practice to telephone and ask the other person whether it will be convenient for him to see you. Otherwise, you may waste time going from your desk to other parts of the building, only to find in many cases that the person in question already has a visitor.

**When there is no private office.** When you call on someone within your own company who has no private office and you notice as you approach his desk that he is talking on the telephone, you are expected to stand aside until he has finished. If there is a vacant chair near by, you may sit down while waiting, but you would not take the chair immediately beside his desk until either he had looked up from the telephone and motioned to you to do so or had finished his call and invited you to be seated.

#### SPECIAL TO SALESMEN

Although a good appearance is essential in every business position, it counts heavily in the salesman's favor. The appearance of women callers is no less subject to review. Outside investigators, demonstrators, saleswomen, training instructors, and lecturers are expected to look worthy of the large concerns that entrust them with so much responsibility under so little supervision. Dark clothes can be chosen for practicality, but they should be livened up with pretty hats. Whether a woman is required to go traveling across the country or around the city, she is expected to pay such close attention to the details of good grooming that she will always look as fresh as if she had just put on an outfit for the first time.

Another way to make a good impression is to remember

the names of everyone. A salesman doesn't have to be reminded of the value of keeping a notebook with the names of purchasing agents and office managers whom he has seen, but he is not always so conscientious about those in lesser positions. Actually, the deciding factor in the purchase of a particular machine is often the opinion of the quiet little girl in the corner who will have to operate it. By remembering and calling her by name, a salesman will help to stimulate her interest in the machine and her confidence in him.

A salesman must be alert to find extra opportunities for putting over his sales talk; but he must put it over in a way that will not prove irritating to those on whom he is calling. He may ask to be taken into the factory to discuss an operation or to be conducted to a section of the store or building to see a display. He may ask to see samples of the work already turned out and compare them with samples that he is able to produce. In the late afternoon, he may offer a buyer a lift to the railroad station or a ride home, if they both live in the same direction. He may invite a buyer to luncheon or dinner.

These efforts to secure an attentive ear are legitimate and businesslike, and as a salesman gains experience he senses when it is advantageous to employ them. However, buyers know them, too, and in their position they may accept or reject these overtures politely. The likelihood of accepting them increases with the amount of sincerity that is evident. When a salesman is so interested in seeing how a company can cut its operating costs that he honestly means it when he asks if he may submit his product for a test, the buyer is likely to show an interest that he never evinces in an offer that is only an empty gesture. When the salesman for a particular machine spends his evenings for a week working out an operating method that will enable a firm to improve the

appearance of its work, the buyer for that firm is convinced of the genuine interest behind the desire to sell.

For all those who visit offices this holds true. When there is sincerity behind their voiced desire to please and an evident effort to do more than their share in making a business transaction pleasant, as well as profitable, the time that they spend on their calls is turned to the greatest advantage.

### FOR DISCUSSION

✓1. Name five situations where people have generally found it preferable to seek an appointment before visiting an office.

✓2. When has it generally proved best to visit someone without seeking an appointment?

3. In the following cases, who has the privilege of setting the time for an appointment?

a. A reporter requests an interview of certain business executives to obtain facts for an article.

b. A salesman who has been traveling over the same route for years has samples ready for a new line of goods. He has already described this new line to his customers on previous visits.

c. A businesswoman serving on a committee finds it necessary to talk over some matters with one of the other committee members.

✓4. What precaution must you take before using the name of a customer as reference when seeking an appointment with a prospect?

5. Why is it important to be on time for an appointment? How can you be sure of not being late?

✓6. Under what circumstances does a man remove his hat when calling at an office? Does a woman ever remove her hat?

✓7. In how many ways can you help make things pleasant for others waiting with you in an anteroom?

✓8. Name at least six ways in which you can show politeness at an interview. Can you think of other ways?

✓9. What are you expected to do on making your departure?

10. If you are calling to see someone in your own company and there is no secretary in attendance, what should you do about entering a private office? What should you do if you are a visitor in a company not your own?

11. Assume that you are calling on someone who has no private office and you notice as you approach his desk that he is talking on the telephone or is engaged with another visitor. What should you do?

✓12. Name two habits most commonly observed by salesmen who make a good impression.

✓13. What unselfish motives play a part in a salesman's success?

14. You have probably had occasion to visit an office—to see your doctor or dentist or to be interviewed for a job. Describe the right and the wrong things that you noticed while in the waiting room.



## **9. TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE**

At a conference recently, a group of secretaries listed their office headaches, and the headache that had top billing was the telephone. This is not surprising. With more than 36 million telephones in this country, the possibilities for confusion and misunderstanding are naturally very great. But the extent of this means of communication indicates a correspondingly enormous opportunity for using our knowledge of business etiquette to make telephoning easier and pleasanter for all concerned.

### **VOICE AND ATTITUDE**

When persons are talking face to face, a smile or a gesture—even one's general expression—help to convey the meaning of the words spoken. Over the telephone, the tone of voice alone gives expression to words.

You can avoid a dull monotone by speaking with a rising inflection. It will sound cheerful and friendly, and will carry well. Be careful, though, not to speak in a voice that is pitched high. That will be tiring, not only to you, but to the listener at the other end of the line. I am thinking now of a girl who speaks with a rising inflection and who has such a lilt to her voice that a man who frequently calls her office said to me, "I love to call her up. She always sounds so happy."

A pleasant voice that we like to hear is one that has no suggestion of hurry, annoyance, or excitement. If it is your habit to speak rapidly, try to slow down. Although you don't mean to sound so, it will seem as if you are anxious to cut the person off. Under no circumstances, no matter how boring they may be, should such a feeling ever be shown.

For clarity, talk directly into the mouthpiece, with your lips not more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch away. The lips should not be pursed together, but the mouth should be opened naturally. When somebody has to ask you to repeat, bring the instrument nearer and continue to speak clearly, but not more loudly. If an operator in the telephone company spoke in the loud voice that many people use, she would be hoarse before the day was over.

Together with a good voice goes the right attitude. We have a higher regard for someone who is quick to go to the files for information than for the fellow who is too lazy to leave his chair. We don't think much of being greeted by a loud cough, when common politeness should tell a person to place his hand over the mouthpiece.

The telephone is a powerful advertising medium. Through its effective use we build business; more than that, we increase our own individual prestige as a businessman or a

businesswoman. By the way we act over the telephone, we advertise the firm for which we are working. Besides, we advertise ourselves.

### RECEIVING CALLS

**Promptness in answering.** By answering your telephone promptly you will be showing threefold consideration: toward the caller by not keeping him waiting; toward those at neighboring desks by not letting your telephone ring on and disturb them needlessly; toward others calling your firm, who will experience less delay through the busy signal when your calls are not tying up lines longer than is necessary.

Whatever work you are doing should be stopped as soon as the telephone rings. It takes only a second to place a paper weight on your material or to slip a pencil or a piece of paper into your place.

**Method of greeting.** (1) *Direct connection.* An outside call is answered by saying, "Good morning. Northy and Sullivan," or, "Good morning. This is Collette's," or, "Good morning. Gilbert's," until 12 o'clock, noon. When the name of the firm is not short, the greeting, "Good morning," may be omitted, but to include it gives a pleasant touch. That is, it is pleasant if the tone is distinct and friendly, as if you were speaking to someone face to face. There is no welcoming quality in "mornin'." The greeting is "Good afternoon" until 6 o'clock; "Good evening," after that, in businesses that remain open later.

In a firm of lawyers, brokers, or architects where the name is long, it is customary to use only the first two names. For example, if the firm name is Smith, Johnson, Brownington and Jones, the management may consider it quite enough to answer, "Smith and Johnson" or to use the telephone number—"Longwood 1234." Simply "Hello" as an answer gen-

erally brings from the caller the question, "Is this the Such-and-Such Company?" So you can do your part in discouraging the useless "hello" habit.

When someone calls your number by mistake, answer his apology with "That's all right."

*On an extension telephone.* If you answer an extension telephone from the switchboard, identify yourself at once by announcing your department and name, or your name alone. Women answer with a title before the name: "Mrs. Jones," "Miss Ray speaking," "Miss Johnson," "Auditing. Miss Smith." Men use no title: "Jones speaking," "This is Johnson," "Cunningham," "Order Department. Smith talking."

If your name is short, to say "talking" or "speaking" or "this is" will help it sound less abrupt. If your name is long, the inclusion of other words may make it more difficult for the caller to hear you clearly.

**Handling calls for someone else.** When you answer someone's telephone for him, the response should be, "Mr. Brown's office" or "Mr. Brown's desk" or "Mr. Brown's phone." (In conversation we generally say "phone" instead of "telephone.")

If you are secretary to two men, with your one telephone connecting either line, you can prevent awkwardness in answering their calls if you will arrange for the switchboard operator to ring once for one of the men, and to give two short rings for calls for the other man. Then you can answer either "Mr. Brown's office" or "Mr. Smith's office."

The same method may be used when you are answering calls on one telephone both for an executive and for those doing the general work of the department. One ring, and the answer would be, "Mr. Brown's office"; two rings, and it would be, "Advertising Department."

When you receive a call for Mr. Brown and he is talking



on another line, say to the caller, "I'm sorry, but Mr. Brown is talking on another line. Will you wait?" If the caller will wait and if Mr. Brown has not finished in a minute or two, speak to the caller again and say, "Mr. Brown is still talking. Will you wait further or can he call you back?" If the call is urgent in comparison with the one that Mr. Brown is handling, you may want to tell him that someone is waiting. In that case, write on a slip of paper, "N. Y. factory on other line," or a similar brief message and place it in front of him. Then he can decide whether or not to cut his present call short.

If Mr. Brown is not in, you will try to be of service. To ask, "May I help you?" will convey a feeling of actually wanting to help, if it is said cheerfully, with a pleasant inflection at the end. You've no doubt heard some people say it in a tone of utter weariness, some with a cough at the end—surely, no way to invite a caller to transact business.

The offer to help may be phrased in many ways:

"I'm sorry, but Mr. Brown is not in. This is Smith. Could I help you?"

"Mr. Brown will be out of the office until 4 o'clock. Wouldn't you like to leave a message?"

"Mr. Brown is no longer with the company. Perhaps I can help you—my name's Johnson."

"He won't be in today. Will you talk with Miss Jones?"

"Mr. Brown is on his vacation, but I'll be glad to take your order."

The following answers are to be avoided, for although they are not impolite they do not show much desire to help.

"I don't know where he is."

"Mr. Brown's not in."

*"Who is calling?"* One habit in business telephoning that is fortunately diminishing, as people recognize it for its rude-

ness, is that of asking, "Who is calling?" which is followed by "Mr. Brown isn't here," after the caller has identified himself. Sometimes a caller will be so provoked that he will hang up—a show of impoliteness on his part that is quite understandable.

If Mr. Brown is not there, why not say so in the first place? If he is there but does not want to answer his telephone until he knows who is calling, this preference of his can be handled in one of the following ways:

Through constant association with her employer, a secretary generally recognizes a caller's voice and can make an immediate connection. When a voice is unfamiliar, she can often learn the caller's name and purpose by suggesting, "This is Mr. Brown's secretary. Perhaps I can help you?"

If the answer is, "I'd like to speak to Mr. Brown personally," the secretary can say, further, "Mr. Brown has asked me to take all his calls first. I'll be very glad to give him any message when I see him later—or probably I could help you now?"

If it develops that the secretary thinks Mr. Brown might want to talk with the caller, it would be better to secure his telephone number and give the message to her employer after hanging up. Then he can call the person back within a few minutes if he wishes to, and the short lapse of time will have done no harm. If the secretary should leave the caller waiting on an open line and go into her employer's office to tell him of the call, it might happen that he would not want to take it after all, and then she would be faced with an embarrassing situation.

As switchboard operator or office assistant, you may find out the name of a caller by answering, "I'll see if I can find Mr. Brown. May I have your name, please?"

If Mr. Brown does not wish to take the call, he probably will not answer future calls from the same person. In that case, you will treat the caller with politeness, yet not encourage him to waste his time further. When you return to the telephone, answer, "Mr. Brown doesn't seem to be available," or "Mr. Brown won't be able to come to the phone for some time."

**Transferring a call.** If Mr. Brown feels that the matter should be handled by someone else in the firm, he may leave it to you to have the call transferred if it is from someone that he does not know. If he has had business relations with the caller, however, the transfer should not be made without some introduction from him.

He should pick up the telephone, pleasantly greet Mr. Caller and listen to his opening remarks, and then say, "I'm sorry, Mr. Caller, but I'm not handling that part of the work any more. But Mr. Thompson in our designing department knows about it. If you will wait just a minute I'll make sure he's in before having you connected."

On another telephone, you or Mr. Brown can call up Mr. Thompson, explain the call to him briefly, and then signal the switchboard operator by clicking slowly. When she comes on the line, say, "Will you please transfer the outside call from Mr. Brown's line to Mr. Thompson. I'll hang up."

**Taking a message.** Whenever you answer the telephone for someone who is away from his desk, always have pad and pencil ready on which to write a message. It is important that you take it down at once. If you depend on your memory, other work may crowd the call out of your mind for hours or forever.

**Printed form.** Pads of printed slips can be bought at a stationer's, or your firm may prefer to have a form of its own

printed. The accompanying suggested form will take care of calls made both by telephone and in person.

It is considered best to print such a form on paper of a color not ordinarily used in the office, such as bright pink,

TO MR. \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_

### WHILE YOU WERE OUT

MR. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONED		PLEASE CALL HIM	
CALLED TO SEE YOU		WILL CALL AGAIN	

MESSAGE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

MESSAGE RECEIVED BY \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### TOLL CALL INFORMATION

TO \_\_\_\_\_ OFFICE CASHIER DATE \_\_\_\_\_

MR. \_\_\_\_\_ CALLED

MR. \_\_\_\_\_ AT \_\_\_\_\_ (CITY)

COST OF CALL \_\_\_\_\_ DEPT. CHARGED \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SIGNED)

so that it will attract a person's attention as soon as he returns.

Just as we should be prompt in answering the telephone, we should be prompt in returning calls. If you are secretary to someone who is careless about this, you may think it best to hold the slips, instead of placing them on his desk. Then, when he returns, you will give them to him, as you ask, "Do you want me to call these people back now for you?" Some secretaries have found it even more satisfactory not to make out slips at all, but to keep a record of calls and, on an employer's return, to say, "Mr. Doane and Miss Lane phoned. Which one do you want me to get for you first?"

Try to secure enough information from a caller so that you can fill in the slip completely. His name is not enough without the name of his company, too. Repeat unfamiliar names, telephone numbers, and amounts, for it is surprising how often they can be heard incorrectly the first time. Messages should be written plainly, and they should be explicit. Memorandums like the following actual examples mean nothing:

"A man called. I didn't understand his name."

"Someone called—it sounded like Clifford or Gifford—I couldn't make it out."

When a person does not give his name clearly, say to him, "I'm sorry, I didn't understand your name," or "I'm sorry, I couldn't hear." If you do not understand it the second time, ask, "I'm very sorry, but would you mind spelling it for me, please?" You will need to be alert as he spells it, and then repeat the spelling.

*For someone who is not coming in.* If you take messages for Mr. K, who is not at his desk, and then learn as the day progresses that he won't be in all day, you may do either of the following:

Show the accumulated calls to someone who can call back for him.

or

Call the people back and explain that you have just learned that Mr. K will not be in; then ask, "Perhaps I can help you?"

*When you know that you will be absent.* If you are expecting a telephone call, but meanwhile you have to go to another part of the building to do some work, tell the switchboard operator where she can locate you when your call comes in. If you are expecting a call and you have to leave the building, tell this to her or to whomever answers your telephone; then time will not be wasted looking for you.

**Orders and inquiries.** These calls should be treated with all the politeness that would be shown if the person could be seen. Employees sometimes regard such work vaguely and thereby lose a tremendous amount of good will for their firms.

Forget that you are speaking into a telephone. You are speaking to a person. Convey through your voice the friendly smile that invites more orders. When someone inquires for information, let him feel that you are ready to help him with his problem. If it develops during a conversation that information desired by a caller is not immediately available, ask for his number and offer to call him back or write to him as soon as you have the information.

At the end of each order that you take, always say, "Thank you," followed by the caller's name. The name may be omitted if it sounded difficult to pronounce when you first heard it and you are afraid of stumbling over it. When someone to whom you have given information thanks you, answer, "You're welcome," and add the name if you know it.

It is considered courteous to let the person who was called hang up first or a lady hang up first when she has been talking with a gentleman, while many firms prefer to let the customer hang up first. However, by the time that two people have finished talking and have said good-by, they are not usually sticklers about this fine point. It is not especially important, anyway, whereas it is very important to put the telephone down gently. To slam a receiver is one of the most discourteous things a person can do.

**Handling complaints.** When someone telephones to make a complaint and only Mr. White handles these calls, say, "I'll connect you with Mr. White. He can help you." Make no comments. In another firm, Mr. Black may handle a complaint only when it seems to be developing into an unusual case. Under this arrangement an assistant will answer the telephone first and take care of the average calls alone. If you are the assistant, you can encourage a telephone caller to talk with you by phrasing your questions somewhat along these lines:

"Mr. Black is not at his desk just now. Could I help you?"

"If you are calling in regard to your account, probably I can help you."

Many firms that spend great amounts of money on advertising and sales promotion to attract new customers seem to forget about using a little free courtesy so as to keep those that they already have. When the manager of a business was attempting to fill the job of telephone adjuster for the third time within a month, he was actually heard to say, "I can't find anyone hard-boiled enough. I want someone who can talk right back every time a customer puts up a squawk."

Even in a firm having good intentions the job of telephone adjuster is too often given to a newcomer, simply because the others don't like this type of work and are quick to pass it

on to the last one in. This is unfortunate, for calls can be handled best by someone who is so familiar with the work procedures in the firm that he can get to the root of each mistake without delay. As long as the telephone is there to enable two people to adjust a matter as quickly as possible, why not do it that way?

If you know how the work is carried on in your firm, and if you will memorize three brief rules, you will find that handling complaints can be pleasant for everyone concerned—yes, even including yourself!

1. *Be attentive.* Don't carry on an aside conversation with someone near by while the caller is talking. Don't attempt to do work at your desk only to find suddenly that the caller has stopped talking and you haven't the faintest idea what he has said.

2. *Don't interrupt.* You would not interrupt a person who came in to talk with you personally. The same rule of etiquette applies in telephone conversations. Besides, one of the shrewdest rules in business is that, by letting a person give his side of the story to his fullest satisfaction, you will find him easier to deal with. For example:

Mrs. Jones telephones and describes the scratch on the new table that she has just bought from your firm. You have a far better chance of mollifying her when she has finished her story than you would have if you kept interrupting parrotlike, saying that "The man will be out this week." She may become so incensed at being interrupted that she will finally say she does not want a scratched table and won't pay for it and your man can come out all right and take it back. But when Mrs. Jones has had her say, it is then your turn to speak, and when you speak, to

3. *Be sympathetic.* Instead of saying "The man will be out this week," say, "I'm very sorry, Mrs. Jones, and I'll put



through an order right now to have our man go out this week." When Mrs. Jones hangs up, it will be with the feeling that her call was given definite attention.

### MAKING CALLS

For interoffice telephoning, no matter how large the building, a person should put in his own calls without relaying them through a secretary. An executive may prefer to follow the modern trend further and also give his outside calls direct to the operator or do his own dialing. More and more, businessmen and businesswomen in the highest positions are realizing the expediency of putting in their own calls. Some of them prefer a half-and-half system, whereby they do not spend time dialing numbers and waiting for lines to be free of busy signals, yet they do not keep others waiting for them. The usual procedure should be as follows:

You would tell your secretary or the switchboard operator, "Please get me the bank," and hang up. As soon as she has dialed, she gives your telephone a short ring and you pick it up in order to be on the line when the bank switchboard is answered. Then you ask for Mr. Gardner and go right into the business at hand as soon as he comes on the line.

If Mr. Gardner's secretary should answer, all you have to do is to ask for him and be right there to talk when he comes on the line a moment later. This is far more courteous than for him to have to wait after answering until you come on the line.

If Mr. Gardner should not be there, very often you can leave a more detailed message for him than you could if your secretary had to seesaw between both parties, quoting one and then the other.

**Best times of day to call people in different lines of work.**  
If you are selling, or seeking a favor, it is important for the

call to run smoothly. You know from experience how flat your carefully prepared "casual" talk is when you finally reach someone after having tried several times. The following list can be offered only as a guide; for not all doctors keep the same hours, nor do all business executives or all stockbrokers. Lawyers in small localities are not so confined to their offices as are those in big city corporations.

Except in the last designation of the group—musicians—it is understood that the person is to be called at his place of business, and not at home.

*Executives and heads of business firms.* The best time to call is after 10 A.M., when their mail has been read and rush dictation is out of the way, until lunch time. In the large cities, they generally go to lunch at 1 o'clock, because they generally come in at 9 o'clock or later. In small localities, where the men save the time that the city worker needs for commuting, they frequently reach the office at about 8:30 and leave for lunch at 12 or 12:30.

For most business executives, afternoons are indefinite. There are visitors, conferences, outside appointments, and trips into the plant. The older men sometimes go home early in the afternoon, especially if they are the owners.

*Lawyers.* When a lawyer is not on a case, he is in his office most of the day. When lawyers are trying cases, their free time depends largely on court hours. Sometimes there is a 2-hour lunch period, during which time a lawyer can return to his office for a little while before the afternoon session. There is a recess in the morning and in the afternoon, from 15 to 30 minutes each, when some lawyers make it a habit to telephone to their offices, to see what calls may have come in. Closing hours vary, but high courts usually adjourn at 4 o'clock and the lower courts at 4:30 or later. The lawyers

then generally return to their offices, to finish up work for the day and prepare the next day's brief.

If you have frequent occasion to telephone law offices, you will find it worth while to find out the local court schedules, including the summer months, when they are closed.

*Doctors.* Unless he is delayed by an emergency case, a doctor tries to be in his office during the hours that he announces. However, those hours, when patients are claiming his attention, are not the best for telephoning on business matters. If you can discuss your business with his secretary in the morning, she can either take care of it for you or give the doctor a message when she sees him.

*Dentists.* The best time for telephoning to a dentist is about 9 o'clock in the morning, before patients start coming. Although a dentist might be in all day, it is only by chance that you would call him when he could leave a patient conveniently, and you will have to be content with relaying a message through his assistant.

*Stockbrokers, securities salesmen.* Their business takes these persons out of the office much of the time, but you are likely to be able to reach them for about an hour in the morning, before the stock exchange opens, and for about an hour in the afternoon, after it closes.

*Outside salesmen generally.* Outside salesmen usually come into the office for an hour or so before making their calls. They cannot start calling on people as soon as the offices are open, because they know that it is better to give businessmen some time to look over the mail and attend to rush matters. They can generally be reached late in the afternoon, when they return to make up their daily reports and talk over calls with the sales manager.

*General office employees.* These are at their desks most of the time.

*Secretaries.* During the first part of the morning secretaries are usually taking dictation and it is inconvenient for them to talk on the telephone.

*Accountants.* An inside accountant can be found at his desk, at almost any time. In order to reach an outside accountant who audits books for his firm's clients, it will often be necessary to call his place of business first and ask if they will call him up and have him call you. His firm may make it a practice not to give out the name of the client he is working for.

*Professors, schoolteachers.* If a teacher is in the classroom, you may leave a message with the office clerk to be delivered when the class is over.

*Contractors, builders.* Contractors and builders begin work early, before 8 o'clock, but they stay in their offices only long enough to attend to business matters before going out on the job. On big contracting jobs, a firm has an office on location.

*People in advertising agencies, in radio stations, and on magazine staffs.* The full-time office employees are at their desks during the same hours as those in general business firms. Those employed at part-time work, as free-lance artists, script writers, and professional talent, have to visit the office at frequent intervals, and they always stop at the receptionist's desk the first thing to pick up messages that may have been left.

In radio stations no one is allowed to be called to the telephone if he is in a studio while a program is being broadcast, even though he is not part of the talent. In advertising and magazine offices there is generally a rule against calling anyone out of a conference.

*Salespeople in stores.* The firms that have stores may adopt rules that make it difficult for salespeople to receive calls.

Unless you know from previous experience in calling a person that it is considered all right to call again during work hours, it would be preferable to write him a letter.

*Store owners, department heads, buyers.* Those included in this group are hard to reach, but the best time to try is in the middle of the morning.

*Grocers, druggists.* During the 2 to 3 o'clock lull, it is generally easier for grocers and druggists to spare time.

*Clergymen.* Avoid calling a clergyman on Friday and Saturday, when he will be preparing his Sunday sermon.

*Factory employees.* Do not call factory employees at work unless it is urgent. Almost always there is a rule that they are not allowed to leave their machines or benches until the foreman has first been satisfied that the call is important. It will be better to write to them. *Foremen.* Even though the foremen may take telephone calls, the noise around them is usually too great to permit satisfactory conversations.

*Musicians.* If a musician plays in a dance orchestra, don't call his home too early in the morning. He will perhaps be up at about 10 o'clock, but not until later than that if he plays in a 4 A.M. night club. Such musicians go out in the afternoon for rehearsals and business calls.

Musicians who play in small orchestras for weddings and social affairs have uncertain hours for rehearsals and engagements, but generally someone answers the telephone who is prepared to handle calls for them, while leaders of big-name orchestras have offices where someone takes care of their business affairs during regular business hours.

**Availability of reference material.** The person who makes the call should be ready to speak as soon as the connection is made. It is rude of anyone to put in a call and, when he is answered, say, "Wait a minute while I get some papers" or "My pencil is broken; wait a minute while I sharpen it."

Before making a call, correlate the questions you intend to ask, the information you intend to give; have in front of you all the papers that you may need for reference. If it develops during a conversation that you will have to get material from the files, or to send for papers, say to the person at the other end of the line, "I'm sorry, but it will take several minutes to get the information. May I call you back?" Secure the information as quickly as possible and call right back, as promised. On a long-distance call there are usually other matters that also need to be discussed, while you have your secretary or someone else in the office procure the information that you require before hanging up.

Otherwise, if it will take only a few seconds to look up something, you might say, "It will take only a moment to look that up. Do you mind waiting?" When you return to the telephone, say, "Thank you for waiting, Mr. Smith." He may answer, "Oh, that's all right," and then you continue with the business at hand.

**Placing a call.** When placing a call, be sure of the number. If you rely on memory, you may get a wrong number and put someone to trouble needlessly. It should be a simple matter to maintain a telephone index for the numbers most frequently called. This index can be in the form of a 10-cent alphabetically indexed notebook or a small metal frame with indexed pages costing about a dollar, which flips open at a desired page. Sometimes, when a great deal of telephoning is done to different places, a revolving rack with panels of numbers is necessary.

There is a further likelihood of getting a wrong number if the number you give is not spoken clearly. Without using an exaggerated ny-un and th-r-r-ee, it is possible for many people to speak more distinctly than they do. For instance, in giving a number to an operator or to someone who is tak-

ing a message, it should be spoken in groups of two digits at a time, with a slight pause between, for example:

Centerville 12 34

Bowling Green 5-67 89

Numbers that end in zeros are given as follows:

2120—Two one two oh

2100—Two one hundred (not Two one oh oh)

2000—Two thousand

2-4100—Two four one hundred

2-4000—Two four thousand

When you have given a number to an operator and she repeats it, let her know she heard it correctly by saying, "Yes, please," or "That's right." If she has heard it incorrectly, say, "No, it's —" and repeat the number more slowly.

When using a dial telephone, don't start to dial the instant you remove the telephone from its cradle. Hold the instrument to your ear and be sure you hear the dial tone; only then is it time to move the indicator. After having dialed or requested a number, allow time for someone to reach the telephone. In businesses where people do not conduct their work seated at desks, it is not always easy for them to leave their work and reach the telephone in less than a minute.

**Wrong number?** If the voice of the person who answers is not familiar, don't ask, "Who is this?" Sometimes the person answering decides to keep the whole thing a mystery, too, and counters by asking whom you want, and this naturally invites you to ask the Strange Voice, "What number is this?" back and forth in the same useless strain. Instead, ask at once, "Is this Mr. Smith?" or "Is this the General Company?" or "Is this Aspen 5-6200?" Then you will readily find out whether or not it is the number you wish.

Whenever you do get a wrong number, don't just hang up without an acknowledgment of the error. All you need to say

by way of apology is "I'm sorry. I have the wrong number," then hang up quietly. There is no need for profuse apology, while at the other extreme it is useless to show impatience by making peevish remarks, such as "But I dialed right" or "What number is this, anyway?"

**Leaving a message.** When you leave a message for someone to call you back, give not only your name but your telephone number, unless the person calls you frequently and would surely know it. Even when you say, "Please ask him to call Mr. Price at the National Company," add "The number is Capitol 3-1000." This will save him or his secretary or an operator the trouble of looking up the number, whereas it will take you only a second or two to give it.

It may sometimes happen that when you have left a message for someone to call you back, you will be absent at the time the call comes. When you call again, say, "I'm sorry I wasn't here when you called back."

**Securing information.** When you telephone to a person, asking for information, he may not have it readily available and will offer to call you back. Then the press of other business may cause him to forget or postpone securing it, or he may be delayed by others. If the matter is on his mind but he cannot give you the answer when it was promised, he should telephone to you to say that he is still trying and will let you know as soon as he can. However, if you do not hear from him, you cannot be expected to know whether he has forgotten or not, so it will be perfectly allowable for you to call him again and say something like this:

"I'll be going to the meeting after lunch and if you have the figures I can take them with me."

"I hope I'm not bothering you, but I wondered if you had had a chance to look up the report yet."

"Our cashier closes the books at 3 o'clock and if you have



No matter how provoking the delay may be, no irritation should be shown. The person looking up the information may have been delayed through no fault of his own and may be doing the best he can to get the information for you.

**Bill collecting.** The successful credit manager of a large wholesale supply house received the following letter from the office of one of his branch jobbers. It seems to describe exactly how most of us are likely to feel about the problem of asking people to pay their bills.

"I am the only girl in this office and it is up to me to do the bill collecting over the telephone. This makes me so nervous I think that if I could afford it I would rather pay the bills myself than have to ask people for money! I know I should treat it as all part of the day's work, but that doesn't save me from being embarrassed all the same and I dread it.

"Can you tell me how to go about this work. I want to be polite, but not weak. As you know, I have to call small shops and individuals and they don't have stated times for paying bills, at least not for paying ours."

The credit manager's answer helped her so much that she has passed it along for the benefit of others:

"1. Before you call a person you have never called before, say his name aloud to yourself so you won't stumble over its pronunciation. If it is a difficult name, keep trying. Be able to say, 'Good morning, Mr. Asteristatistical' with ease, and you will be at ease and Mr. A. will like you for repeating his name.

"2. Have faith in the things your firm sells. You have advertising circulars around telling how good their stuff is. Read them all. Be convinced that your firm has sold the best merchandise of its kind to these people, and you are under no obligation to them in any way for the money. I don't think a person ought to work for a company unless he has faith in its product, whether it's tractors or a five-cent gadget.

"3. Follow up your accounts with regularity. Slack collection

methods are death to good collecting. If you let an account go for three months, then jump on it every week for three or four weeks, and then when a part payment comes in you let it go again until any old time, the customer will know you are not watching his account carefully. It is only to be expected that he won't make another payment until you get after him again.

"It will be much easier for you if you keep a follow-up file and watch it every day, and call people when they first start to slip. You can be lots softer then, and give them extensions, and they will feel more friendly.

"4. In trying to keep an eye on due dates, you still want to exercise thoughtfulness regarding the customer's circumstances. Try to understand his financial problems, and take his word for it when he makes promises for the future—until he breaks them.

"At the same time, don't lose sight of the fact your employer has financial obligations to meet, too, and he would like to meet them with the money that is rightfully his.

"5. Always be polite, even when the customer isn't. Don't let him scare you with bullying. Keep calm and speak politely, and pretty soon he will stop the play acting.

"Never forget that courtesy pays in credit work, as it does in everything else."

#### INTERRUPTIONS

Because of its very function, the telephone is a demanding thing; but in acceding to its demands, always keep a cool head. An interruption, for one thing, can cause a difficult situation if it is not treated with instant consideration.

#### **When a telephone conversation is interrupted**

ILLUSTRATION 1. *You are disconnected during a telephone conversation.*

If you are the one who has put in the call, it is courteous for you to call the person right back. If the other person put in the call, he should call you; but if he does not do so in a minute or two, put in the call yourself. If you are a man and

the other person a woman, she may think that the man should call again, but this is being too fussy.

ILLUSTRATION 2. *Someone is talking on the telephone—for instance, your employer or a person working near you—and you must tell him something before he hangs up.*

If you try to interrupt him when he is talking, he will hear neither you nor the person at the other end of the line. Jot down the message on a slip of paper and place it before him. It need not be a lengthy memo, just several words as a reminder. If he is not entirely sure of what you mean, he can say, before hanging up, "Just a minute, please. I think there's something else," and turn to you as you are waiting. You can then explain more fully to him.

ILLUSTRATION 3. *Office sounds interrupt in cramped quarters.*

A bookkeeper tells of a situation which is not unusual in small offices and in firms where the bulk of the space must be given to factory operations:

"My firm has cramped office quarters, so that the adding machine I operate has to be placed between the two desks occupied by my partner-employers. Neither man can hear over the telephone clearly when I use the machine, yet each one resents it if I stop work for the other, as if I am wasting time.

"I have learned to use these stopping periods to do whatever work has accumulated requiring the use of a pen or pencil. I sort vouchers, check the machine tape, make handwritten entries, and so on. During the longer conversations if I run out of work I flip folders around in the files or go out for a drink of water."

### **When the telephone interrupts others**

ILLUSTRATION 4. *You are talking with someone in the office and your telephone rings. This is a frequent interruption.*

Don't pick up the instrument while you continue your conversation with the visitor beside you. Over the wires the

listener hears the last few words, meaningless perhaps to him, but he will feel that his call is not going to receive your complete attention.

When the telephone rings, finish your sentence as quickly as you can, or wait until your visitor has finished a sentence. As you reach for the telephone, ask the visitor, "Will you excuse me?" or "Excuse me, please?" and pick it up.

ILLUSTRATION 5. *You have dialed a number, and by some freak accident you are connected with two people talking on the line.*

You are the one to hang up, and at once. Then dial again. If you have put in a station-to-station toll call, you might try to signal the operator by slowly clicking; but if she does not respond soon, hang up. Then immediately call the operator and explain to her what happened. She will know from the short lapse of time since you had put in the first call that you could not have carried on a conversation, and she can go ahead with your call a second time without charging you for it. People already on the line should never be asked—or told, as has sometimes happened—to get off the line.

ILLUSTRATION 6. *You are in someone's private office and he receives a telephone call. Should you remain or leave?*

He may say to the person on the line, "May I call you back?" If he does, remain seated. Even though there may be a little more conversation, the telephone call will be brief, for he evidently does not want it to interrupt his conversation with you.

He may prefer to keep the call. If you were taking dictation, remain seated when the call is a business matter. If the call is obviously personal, it would be in better taste for you to go out to your desk until the conversation is finished, when you can be called in again. However, you may have

been told on a previous occasion that there is no need to leave when the one from whom you take dictation has personal calls, in which case you would remain. You may busy yourself with glancing through your shorthand notes and writing in translations for some of the more difficult outlines. Not only will this help you appear uninterested, but it will help to make the transcribing of the notes easier afterward.

If you are in the office of someone in your firm—either your employer or someone in another department—and the call pertains to a matter that you both know about, there would be no need to leave. If the call seems to be personal or if it is developing into a lengthy conversation, you might start to go. If the one with whom you have been working wishes you to remain he can motion to you. If he does not, he can ring for his secretary when his call is finished and tell her to have you return. The procedure depends on the relative positions in business of the two persons involved, as well as on the urgency of the call.

If you are an outside visitor, whether the call seems to be business or personal, you should start to rise from your chair and ask, "Shall I step out?" He will probably say, "Oh, no, stay right there," or "Don't go. I'll only be a minute." Then, no matter what turn his conversation takes, you need not feel uncomfortable at overhearing it.

He may say, "If you don't mind, thank you." Leave your hat (if you are a man) and coat there if you had brought them in with you, and go outside. You may skim through a magazine while waiting, but you will probably not have to wait long, for a call that made an interruption should be kept as brief as possible. The instant it is finished, the one with whom you were engaged should come right out and say, "Thank you. I'm sorry we were interrupted," or "Thank

you very much for waiting," and hold the door open while you reenter.

If you are visiting someone whose desk is in an outside area with others, you would not ordinarily leave or even make a sign to go. It would look awkward to walk away a few feet, and anyway in an open office the people at adjacent desks no doubt can hear, too, so not much privacy is afforded.

*ILLUSTRATION 7. A telephone call comes for Miss Adams, who is not at her desk. You see her a few feet away, engaged in conversation with another employee. Should you interrupt, to tell her that she has a call?*

Yes, you should tell her. Go to them and stand a little to one side. Miss Adams will either pause in her conversation and wait for you to speak or she may ask you, "Do you wish to see me?" In either case, you will say, "Excuse me, but there's a telephone call for you," or "Excuse me, there's a long-distance call for you," if that is so.

*ILLUSTRATION 8. Another call comes for Miss Adams. This time she is talking with a visitor.*

Unless you recognize the caller's voice, ask, "Is this an outside call?" If it is, Miss Adams should be interrupted.

If the call is from someone within the firm, it would generally be preferable to tell the caller, "She's away from her desk right now, talking with a visitor. Would you like to have me get her?" This is a courteous attitude toward the telephone caller, especially if he is one of the executives, and it affords him the opportunity to leave a message instead, if he wishes.

If Miss Adams is interrupted,

1. She may say to the visitor, "Will you excuse me, please?" or, "I'll be right back; do you mind waiting?" and leave him while she takes the call.

or

2. If she knows that the telephone call will take more than a few minutes, she might see that the visitor is seated in the reception space or even in her private office.

or

3. She might ask you or someone near by to finish serving the visitor, as she excuses herself to take the call.

or

4. She may ask you to take a message from the telephone caller, in case that she feels it would be better not to leave her visitor (usually a customer).

If someone asks you to take a message for Miss Adams and waits at the telephone for a reply, say, instead, "Miss Adams, may I speak with you for just a moment?" and look at the visitor, saying, "Excuse me, please?" He should make some agreeable answer like "Of course" or "Go right ahead." Step to one side, where Miss Adams can join you.

#### SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR SWITCHBOARD OPERATORS

One day, I was visiting a firm that is down at the heels in every respect, with musty offices, poor lighting, and even a bookkeeper on a high stool making entries in a ledger.

The switchboard operator had a lending-library book spread open so that it frequently got caught in the keys. When it became too annoying, she propped it up; but when it knocked over her bottle of hand lotion, she put the book in her lap and curved over it. As she hadn't left the buzzer key open, it was several minutes before she raised her head to glance at the board, which by that time was lighted up like a Christmas tree. She had the presence of mind to answer the boss's call first, but her "Yuh" was hardly attentive.

Then someone asked her to put in a call. She dialed the number; while the connection was being made she closed her key and answered several other calls. By the time that she came back to her first call, the one who had answered had already hung up upon finding no one on the line. She dialed the number again, walked away from the board to return a borrowed sweater, and came back in time to catch the outside call with, "'Lo, this XYZ Comp'ny?" While she was adding, "I-have-a-call-for-you-wait-a-minute," she rang the person in her firm who had put in the call. But he did not answer his telephone, so she rang again and again until someone finally came on to tell her that he wasn't there.

Her outside key had been open all this time, so she merely continued talking. "Isn't that the limit? He was here a minute ago. I'll have to call you back." Then, without further amplification, she pulled out the cord.

No firm with an eye to business would want its telephone service treated in that way. Unanswered and incompleted calls tie up a board so that outsiders get the busy signal instead of a response, and the whole communication system is slowed down to a point where everyone has poor service.

**Attention to switchboard signals.** Ordinarily signals should be answered in the order of their appearance. When two or more signals appear at the same time, they are to be given attention in the following order:

*Flashing cord signals.* A flashing cord signal indicates a need for immediate attention to an existing connection and should be answered before any other signal. Generally it is to ask that a call be transferred to someone else. Clear questioning of doubtful callers in the beginning can often prevent much needless transferring. It is annoying to outsiders not to get the right party the first time. This type of signal is answered with "Yes, please."



*Incoming trunk signals.* Prompt answer to these outside calls will give people a good impression of your firm and of your efficiency. When more than one trunk line flashes a call, the lines should be answered in turn.

If one caller attempts to carry on a long conversation, which forces you to keep other calls waiting, say, "Will you hold the line a moment, please," and answer the second and third calls. Then return to the first person when you can give him more time. As most incoming calls require simply a connection and no conversation on your part, you should try to take care of them immediately, without letting any one call hold them up.

Acknowledge each request with, "Thank you," before making the connection. If the desired extension is busy, substitute, "The line is busy; will you wait?" When you are answered in the affirmative, say, "Thank you."

**PROGRESS REPORTS ON A BUSY LINE.** If the call is delayed for more than a minute by a busy line, make a progress report to the caller by saying, "I'm sorry, but the line is still busy. Will you wait?" If he still says that he will wait, answer again, "Thank you." Each time you give a progress report, remain in on the connection long enough to hear the person acknowledge it or change his order.

It is generally practical to give progress reports at intervals of a minute. Not only will this indicate your courtesy in trying to complete a connection, but the caller will be encouraged to wait.

When you can finally connect a person with a line that has been busy, say, "The line is free now. Thank you for waiting."

*Extension signals.* These signals, which represent calls from within the organization, may be answered with "Op-

erator," "Switchboard," or "Your call, please?" It is not enough merely to open the key, making no acknowledgment.

When someone asks you to put in a call, repeat the number to him. When he answers, "Yes, please," say, "Thank you." Be careful that the key is not left open or the plugging in of a trunk cord may hurt his ear.

When someone asks for another interoffice line and that is busy, he may request you to call him when the line is free. Jot it down on a memo pad, in order not to forget.

*Disconnect signals.* A disconnect signal indicates that a conversation is ended and that the connection should be taken down. Disconnecting may be done as an overlap operation and will not interfere with good service to the other types of signals.

**Irritating calls.** As an operator, you can hardly escape calls from people who are unreasonable, but try not to let them upset you. If you become disturbed, you will be thinking of one call when the next one comes in, and because you are still tense and angry there will be a sharpness in your voice.

Perhaps the caller has trouble with the English language and does not mean to sound cross, or your firm may have made mistake after mistake in dealing with him so that he's getting excusably provoked. However unfair it may be for you to be the target, keep in mind that the amount of time you have to spend on such a call is actually very small, and in another minute or two your part in it will be over.

At the end of the day put all annoyances behind you and go out and enjoy yourself.

**Unfamiliar names.** You may occasionally receive a call for someone in the organization of whom you never heard before. In a small organization, you would be likely to have heard when someone new was starting to work, so in that case you might answer the caller, "There is no one by that

name here. Are you sure that you want Such-and-Such Company?" People make mistakes in dialing, or they do not remember accurately the names of the firms that they intend to call.

In a firm of considerable size, it would be best not to trust to hearsay, or even to depend on being notified. Say to the caller, "I don't know of anyone by that name here. Do you want me to check with the salary department?" He will probably give you further details then, such as initials or the approximate date on which the person started to work. Thank him, and inquire immediately of someone who can give you accurate information.

**Presents and tips.** In hotels, expensive apartment buildings, and clubs, a switchboard operator is offered presents and money by some of the guests. These tips are given for various reasons: a visiting celebrity who has had a number of long distance calls will want to show his appreciation for an operator's efficiency in getting his calls through promptly; at Christmas, a year-round guest will include the operator in his list of the employees whom he remembers; someone who is ill or out a great deal may depend on the operator to handle a number of personal messages.

As long as none of this extra attention is given at the expense of continued good service to all the guests, it is perfectly correct to accept tips in the form of impersonal presents or money. An operator simply needs to be careful not to give added consideration only with an eye to a reward, instead of offering it as part of her desire to be of service.

Thank a person warmly at the time of receiving such a gift. If you have occasion to see him again, mention how delicious the candy was; if he gave you theater tickets, tell him how much you enjoyed the show. Some little added

thank you like this will show that you really appreciated his choice.

If you work where there is a ruling against office employees' accepting tips, say to a guest, "I'm very sorry, but the management has made a rule that no one in the office may accept tips." You will need to be properly regretful, but definite, when declining a tip—regretful, for fear the guest may think that you consider the tip too small and that you are disdainful of it; definite, so that he won't press you further to accept it and perhaps cause the loss of your job.

In many clubs—but not usually in hotels—a "no tipping" rule applies to all the employees; but at Christmas the members of the club have a chance to contribute to a bonus fund. The switchboard operator, like other employees who have rendered service to the guests, shares in the distribution of the fund.

#### PERSONAL CALLS

A business telephone is not to be used for chatting and date making and calling the weather service. This has a bad effect on customers who overhear such calls, and who will think that the firm can't be very busy—or very businesslike. Besides, it has a bad effect on the boss. Just because he is out, it's not a good idea to use the line for long talks with your friends. All the time you are tying up the line, he may be trying to call you!

Whenever it is necessary that you use the telephone for a personal call, offer to pay for it. In the case of an out-of-town call, as soon as you have hung up call the operator and ask her what the charge for the call is. In making your reimbursement, add the tax. The firm may not require you to pay for a local call, especially if the employees do not abuse this privilege; but unless you know this definitely, make the offer

to the switchboard operator or to someone in charge of the office.

By assuming the expense of your personal calls, by making them with discretion, you will continue to sound the keynote of the practices described throughout this chapter: individual responsibility for good telephoning.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. If you need to improve your telephone voice, name three things that you can do.
2. What quality is coupled with a good voice in order to make the best impression over the telephone?
3. How does it show consideration toward others for a person to answer his telephone promptly?
4. At what times of the day can the greetings "Good morning," "Good afternoon," and "Good evening" be used? Are they always used?
5. How would you answer the telephone when the call comes for you through a switchboard?
6. How would you handle a call for someone else when
  - a. He is not in?
  - b. He does not wish to answer the telephone until he knows who is calling?
7. How would you transfer to someone else in the organization a call that you have received?
8. In taking a message for someone, what care should you exercise to be sure that the message will be clear?
9. When someone has telephoned and left a message for you in your absence, what courtesy is expected of you toward the caller?
10. Give three suggestions for taking the unpleasantness out of handling complaints.
11. Name at least six courtesies that you are expected to observe when you put in a telephone call.

12. How would you handle telephone interruptions in the following cases?

- a. While talking on the telephone you are disconnected.
- b. Someone who works with you is talking on the telephone. It is necessary for you to tell him something before he hangs up.
- c. Someone with a desk near yours cannot hear over the telephone when you operate an office machine.

13. When a telephone call interrupts others, how would you handle the situation?

- a. You are talking with someone when your telephone rings.
- b. After you have dialed a number, you happen to come in on two people talking on the line.
- c. When you are in someone's private office, he receives a telephone call. Should you remain or leave?
- d. You answer the telephone for a coworker who is a short distance away, engaged in conversation with another employee. Should you interrupt to tell him that he has a call?
- e. You answer the telephone for a coworker who is talking with a visitor. Should you interrupt him?

14. If you are talking with someone in person and your telephone rings, what courtesy do you show toward the person with you? If someone else answers the telephone and it develops that the call is for you, what should you do if you have to leave a visitor to answer it?

15. Assume that your job includes the handling of telephone orders and inquiries. Make a list of rules that you would try to follow in order to give the best service to those who call.

16. How long a list can you make, describing situations where a switchboard operator's courtesy and tact will help build good will for her firm?



## 10. THE ETIQUETTE OF LETTER WRITING IN BUSINESS

### EACH LETTER AS REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR FIRM

The impression that a firm makes through its correspondence is the most lasting impression of all. A customer may forget after a while the personal greeting and the telephone conversation, but the letter that he receives may stay with him for a lifetime.

**Prompt acknowledgment.** Answering your mail promptly is good business, as well as good manners. Occasional delay in attending to pressing matters may weaken the confidence that customers have in you, while habitual laxity may result in your losing their business altogether.

When a matter is not of an urgent nature, it should be taken care of just as soon as the more important correspondence is out of the way. To let mail lie around day after day only postpones the task of answering, so it might as well be

attended to before an impatient customer writes a follow-up note asking for a reply.

Many a businessman would never catch up on his letter writing if his secretary didn't prod him. A man may not be lazy, but he will just hate to dictate, or he will be busy when his mail comes in and will let it accumulate more than he realizes. Secretaries have found that they can tactfully urge a boss to answer his mail by suggestions like the following:

"Is there anything special you'd like to say to Mr. Jones, or shall I simply write him that we received the diagrams?"

"Do you want Mr. Brown to come in next week with his samples?"

"Shall I draft a note to Mr. Allen, telling him how you plan to divide his order into three carloads?"

Sometimes you will be prevented from replying as quickly as you would like because of a delay for which you are not responsible. Perhaps the bookkeeping department has not been able to prepare certain figures yet. Perhaps illness in the shop or a breakdown in your transportation system has made it impossible for you to give a definite answer to a customer's question about delivery.

Instead of postponing the writing of your letter until you have all the facts, you are expected to acknowledge the person's letter and explain the reason for not being able to take care of it fully. The following is an example.

Dear Mr. Hall:

I was glad to learn from your letter of the 16th that you are still interested in the results of the survey which we are conducting.

We had hoped to have all the reports in by now, but owing to the illness of two of our field interviewers, the results have



been delayed. However, according to the latest word received from the interviewers, their reports should be in sometime this month.

It should not take our research department more than a couple of days to finish its work when the remaining reports are in, and then we can give you a preliminary report before the statistical department arrives at the final, definite figures.

I am sure that you will be pleased at the thoroughness with which we have conducted the questionnaires, and that you will be extremely interested in the comments from people who were interviewed. This survey, I feel, is the best one of its kind that has ever been conducted.

Cordially yours,

Dear Mr. Miller:

Thank you very much for your order of January 10 for 2,000 cans of Super Duper Fruit Juice.

Owing to an unexpected shortage of packing cases, we regret that we shall not be able to complete your entire order for about two weeks. We can, however, send you 300 cans at once, and we are doing so today by Intercity Express. We are quite sure of getting partial delivery of our order of packing cases from the manufacturer in time to make another delivery of 500 cans by the end of this week, and the balance during the following week.

We are sorry to have to make these partial deliveries, and we sincerely hope that they will not inconvenience you.

Thank you again for your very good order. We are always glad of the opportunity to serve the Save-money Food Mart.

Very truly yours,

Occasionally you may receive a letter that can be answered better by someone else in your organization than by you. If you are a salesman, this may happen quite frequently. You are the only person that your customers know in the firm where you work, but the correspondence will be on subjects that other departments are better equipped to answer.

Before a letter is turned over to someone else, however, it has been found best to send a letter of acknowledgment at once to the person who wrote and mention that Mr. Blank in your firm is answering the letter. This courteous gesture serves a double purpose: First, and obviously, it assures the outsider without delay that his letter was received and that it will be answered by someone fully qualified to do so. Second, by attaching a carbon copy of your reply to the original letter when you pass it along, you remind the person in your firm that a reply is being awaited. Such a letter of acknowledgment is the following:

Dear Mr. Lane:

I received your letter this morning asking for a description of the new KRJ72 machine, which we expect to put on the market this year.

As the company has not yet prepared any printed material on this machine, I have turned your letter over to Mr. Wells, our engineer. I am sure that he can give you a much more detailed description of the machine and its functions that I can, for plans are just getting under way now for training classes to acquaint salesmen like myself with the new process.

However, as soon as one of our working models comes back from the laboratories, I shall take it over to you so that you can examine it as a supplement to our engineer's reply.

I am delighted that you are interested in the possibilities of this new machine for your plant. With the fine precision

work required in making your products, it would seem that the KRJ72 is the perfect answer to your needs.

Kind personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

Cc. Mr. Philip T. Wells  
Engineering Department

There are exceptions to this practice of sending a letter of acknowledgment. In some firms, for instance, the rules about prompt acknowledgment of mail are so strict that there is no danger of the letter's going unanswered, so if you should turn it over to someone in the next department at 9:20 in the morning he will probably have dictated, signed, and sent a letter out in the noon mail collection. An additional note from you to the outsider in this case would be not only unnecessary, but actually wasteful.

When a top executive turns over part of his mail nearly every day to an assistant or to various department heads for them to take care of, his secretary jots down a reminder somewhere in her records, so that she can follow up if she does not in turn receive carbon copies of their replies. Further than this, however, extra letter writing has seldom been found necessary, for junior executives are ordinarily very careful to answer promptly mail that comes addressed to the big boss.

**Clarity.** The ability to write a clear letter is considered absolutely essential in business. Your letter need not be long in order to be explanatory. Quite the contrary, for unless a subject is involved or unless many subjects are being discussed in a letter, one sheet of paper should be enough.

At the other extreme, a letter may be too brief. Care must be taken to include all explanatory details. Relative pro-

nouns must not be omitted. "Re. yrs. the 12th" should never take the place of a simple opening sentence. In an effort at brevity, a letter should not be clipped so short that it sounds more like a cablegram.

Until you have gained practice in composing business letters, you may wish to check your work by asking yourself the following questions concerning each letter that you write:

Is my introductory sentence short and clear?

Are my nouns and verbs chosen for their clarity, so that I don't need a lot of adjectives and phrases to try to explain my thoughts?

Is my phrasing simple, or am I so repetitious and wordy that I'm tiresome?

Have I been definite when making reference to something, or have I used a vague "it" that might refer to several things?

Will other people understand the technical terms that I am accustomed to using?

Have I been sure to accompany my requests with "please" and my acknowledgments with "thank you"?

If I am answering a letter, have I reread it, to be sure that no question has been overlooked? People won't like the bother of writing back, or the expense of telegrams or telephone calls, if my answer is incomplete the first time.

**Accuracy.** Be sure that the information that you take pains to explain so clearly is accurate, as well. When tables of figures are included in a letter, they should be proofread before the letter is sent out. The same is true of financial reports, tax returns, and material for a printer—all work that has to be correct the first time. ("Proofreading" means that one person reads aloud from the original notes while a second person follows along the finished work, to catch any errors.)

If you are a secretary and there is doubt in your mind about the accuracy of certain information that your em-

ployer dictates to you, check by looking through the files and at the correspondence that is being answered. It is especially easy for people to make slips while dictating, because they are thinking of several things at the same time: their grammar, the problem at hand, the solution, and the way things will sound when read.

If your employer leaves it to you to sign the letters that he dictates, check with him on questionable points. Only if you have reason to feel absolutely sure about a matter should you take the responsibility of making the correction alone. Wrong guessing can cause a great deal of trouble.

Because good spelling is considered most important by employers, they place it high on the list of qualifications when they are hiring a secretary. Some girls find it easy to spell correctly, but when they come up against a troublesome word, they do the same as secretaries not so gifted and immediately look up the word in the office dictionary.

The carelessness of misspelled words becomes an affront when a proper name is spelled incorrectly. The person receiving a letter feels that if he was important enough for a firm to write to him soliciting his business and promising de luxe service, and so on and on, his name should have been written correctly.

In addition, a woman doesn't care to be called "Mr." when she is Mrs., or "Mrs." when she is Miss.

It takes just a few seconds to look in the office files, the telephone book, or the city directory, in order to verify the correct spelling of a name. Although this effort to ensure accuracy in letter writing may seem to be a small matter, firms have found through experience that it helps surprisingly in building up good will toward their customers.

A question that often bothers secretaries and stenographers

is whether or not they should change the grammar in a letter that the boss has dictated. When an error is so glaring that the boss himself will wonder how he could ever have made such a slip, it should be caught and corrected by the person who transcribes the dictation.

Even when an error is not serious, but can be changed easily without disturbing the rest of the sentence, a secretary will see that the change is made. However, if this slight change will involve rewriting a sentence, or perhaps a paragraph, the better course would be to let it go. For one thing, there is the danger of changing the sense of the dictation, and for another thing, the boss will probably be disturbed when he reads the letter just before signing it and doesn't recognize his own dictation.

When a whole paragraph is so poorly constructed that it doesn't make much sense, even to the secretary who is somewhat familiar with the subject, it will need a little revising before it is sent out. Here, again, caution must be exercised, for through zeal in making grammatical improvements, the whole meaning that the writer intended to convey may be lost. It has been found that the safest way to make revisions is, first, to cut out meaningless phrases and conjunctions that clog the writing and, second, to break up long, unwieldy sentences into short sentences. The result will probably not be exactly what you'd like, but it will no doubt be clearer than the original. Just as important is it that the boss, in reading the letter placed before him to sign, shall still be able to recognize his own thoughts.

In one day's mail a certain businessman received letters containing the following three paragraphs. He suggested that they might provide the readers of this book a little material for discussion, so they are reproduced here.

"In addition to this fact, as far as the main office is concerned, the conditions under which we are working I believe it would be less costly to operate a new machine as far as changing over the office would be concerned as the machine is getting old now."

A little blue-penciling changed the paragraph to read as follows:

"As far as conditions in the main office are concerned, I believe it would be less costly to operate a new machine than to continue with a machine which is getting old."

You might like to see what you can do with the next two paragraphs:

"We cannot eliminate all the daylight and even if some of the lights are not on, this is not convenient for those who are working nearby and at the most we only get a subdued daylight which is not too bad if the sun is not out, which is not very often during working hours, so it seems."

"As you can readily see although these differences in cost speak for themselves very pointedly, there is another factor that is involved in which I cannot give you figures on but which the demonstration we made here, in making these 60 prints will mean a great deal to you. That is, in the saving in time of the operator in producing the number of prints."

**Tone.** Over the years there has been a decided relaxation in business relations, until the stiff formality of earlier generations has gradually given way to the friendly and natural tone that usually characterizes the modern business letter. We write as if we were talking to somebody, not as if we were trying to impress him with our pompous vocabulary.

Such superfluous, as well as ungrammatical, expressions as "Yours of the 7th at hand and contents duly noted" and "As

per your inquiry" have been discarded. The flowery "I beg to remain" and "Believe me to be your most obedient servant" have been recognized for the false expressions of obeisance that they were. And even the impersonal "Dear Sir" has been supplanted to a great extent by "My dear Mr. —" and "Dear Mr. —," using the person's name.

When something happens that provokes us so much we are tempted to write an angry letter, we do well to stop and realize that people old enough to be working are expected to be self-disciplined, instead of indulging in childish outbursts. The sarcastic phrase, the blunt reminder, the high and mighty refusal to give any answer at all are not the expressions used by well-mannered people. For that matter, they never are used by people who hope to prosper in business. There are so many opportunities in letter writing to promote good will through a friendly and courteous tone that no intelligent businessman or businesswoman passes them by.

**Attractiveness.** The management of every progressive firm lays much stress on the appearance of its correspondence. There is general agreement that if a letter is worth writing it is worth writing well, and that, like the products it sells, a letter should be attractively presented to the one who will receive it.

The first thing that anyone notices is the way that a letter is placed on the paper. It shouldn't take long for a girl who has received a thorough training in shorthand and typing to be able to judge from her shorthand notes the approximate length of a letter. Then as she rolls the paper into the machine, she can plan how far down to begin and what marginal stops to set, in order to have the best possible arrangement.

However hurried a girl may be, she is expected to take



the time to camouflage her typing errors. It is a little difficult sometimes to turn out good work on office stationery having little or no rag content, but with patience you can do a passable erasing job. Instead of using a typewriter eraser, use the softer kind, like that on the end of a pencil; rub lightly and stop after every few strokes to see whether you have erased enough. Erasing cannot be allowed in school or you would never learn how to type, but in a business office you are supposed to have left your practice days behind you and to use no more stationery than is necessary.

Another evidence of an untidy letter is a correction or an afterthought inserted in ink. Whether it is the fault of the secretary or her boss that the work wasn't typed correctly, the whole letter should be done over if an error cannot be erased and corrected neatly. Those who dictate can cooperate by making any changes lightly in pencil in the margin, and not in ink, so that the secretary at least will have the chance of making the letter look right.

Capital letters that are off the line also detract from the appearance of a letter. When a machine is to blame, only a slight repair job is necessary, but in most cases the typist could use a little more pressure on the shift key.

You might think that no one would send out a letter with a blot, but when a letter has been signed in a heavy scrawl and is immediately folded up, the signature usually leaves a double row of ink marks.

A faint ribbon makes typing harder, for then you have to pound in order to get the maximum intensity. By keeping a pair of rubber gloves handy in a desk drawer, you can protect your hands whenever a new ribbon is needed. With more frequent changing of ribbons than you might otherwise make, you will produce readable work with the least

amount of effort. There's no sense in wasting your energy when typing. Save it for the details that count and you will turn out an attractive letter.

#### FORMS OF ADDRESS AND SALUTATIONS

For addressing people in various positions, more forms than one are frequently acceptable. The following list is, therefore, not to be considered as the only authority.

#### **General**

##### *A business organization*

White Company, Inc.

21 Sutton Avenue

Chicago, Illinois

Gentlemen:

##### *An organization of women*

The Business and Professional Women's Club

11 Marlboro Street

Atlanta, Georgia

Ladies:

or

Mesdames:

##### *A business firm of women and men*

Gentlemen:

##### *A social club, committee, or similar group of men and women*

Ladies and Gentlemen:

or

My dear Mrs. Jones and Mr. Smith:

*A man*

Mr. William Green  
Brown Brothers  
11 Broadview Street  
St. Louis, Missouri

Dear Mr. Green: (preferred)

or

My dear Mr. Green: (slightly more formal)

or

Dear Jim: (when a friend is called by his first name)

“My dear Mr. Green:” is not used when the letter is to be signed by a company. “Dear Sir:” can be used, but the trend in business is away from such an impersonal approach, so “Dear Mr. Green:” would be preferred.

*Two men, when their association in business is a partnership or similar personal arrangement, and not a company*

Messrs. Philip White and William Green  
21 Lincoln Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

Gentlemen:

If both men have the same last name:

Messrs. Philip and Arthur White  
(Address)

Gentlemen:

*An unmarried woman, and when you don't know whether or not a woman is unmarried*

Miss Mary Allen  
Brown Brothers  
40 Dania Street  
San Francisco, California

Dear Miss Allen: (preferred)

or

My dear Miss Allen: (slightly more formal)

or

Dear Mary: (when a friend is called by her first name)

*A married woman or a widow*

Mrs. Robert T. Allen  
Brown Brothers  
85 Hawley Street  
Dallas, Texas

If you don't know her husband's first name, or if she uses her own first name in signing her letters, you can address her only as follows:

Mrs. Mary Allen  
(Address)

Dear Mrs. Allen: (preferred)

or

My dear Mrs. Allen: (slightly more formal)

or

Dear Mary: (when a friend is called by her first name)

*A divorcée*

Mrs. Butler Allen (preferred)

or

Mrs. M. B. Allen

or

Miss Mary Butler (if she has retained her maiden name  
in business)

(Address)

Dear Mrs. Allen:

or

Dear Miss Butler:

or

My dear etc.

*Two women, when their association in business is a partnership or similar personal arrangement, and not a company*

Misses Mary Smith and Helen Thompson (if both  
women are single)

(Address)

Ladies:

Mesdames Mary Smith and Helen Thompson (if one or  
both women are not single)

(Address)

Ladies:

or

Mesdames:

Misses Mary and Helen Thompson (if both women have  
the same last name)

(Address)

Ladies:

*A married couple*

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Deane  
(Address)

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Deane: (preferred)  
or

My dear Mr. and Mrs. Deane: (slightly more formal)

*A doctor*

Dr. Arthur G. Marshall  
or  
Arthur G. Marshall, M.D.  
(Address)

Dear Doctor <sup>1</sup> Marshall:

*A dentist*

Dr. William A. White  
or  
William A. White, D.M.D.  
(Address)

Dear Doctor <sup>1</sup> White:

*A lawyer*

Edward J. Carney, Esq.  
or  
Mr. Edward J. Carney  
Attorney-at-Law  
(Address)

Dear Mr. Carney:

<sup>1</sup> According to established usage, the title "Doctor" is spelled out in the salutation of a letter but the abbreviation "Dr." is coming into general use.

*Firm of lawyers, architects, accountants, engineers, etc. when Company or Inc. is not part of the name*

Messrs. Carney, Meade and Thomas  
(Address)

Gentlemen:

NOTE: In the following illustrations, Miss or Mrs. is substituted for Mr. before a proper name, but Madam is used for both married and single women before a title:

My dear Miss Lang:  
My dear Mrs. Lang:  
My dear Madam Secretary:  
My dear Madam Mayor:

Although the longer form, "The Honorable," is still retained in diplomatic correspondence, the designation "Hon." is far more generally used by members of the public when writing to government officials.

### **Government officials**

#### *Federal officials*

##### *The President of the United States*

The President  
The White House  
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

##### *The Vice-President*

Hon. (full name)  
Vice-President of the United States  
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Vice-President:  
or  
My dear Mr. (last name):

*Speaker of the House*

Hon. (full name)

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Speaker:

or

My dear Mr. (last name):

*Cabinet Member*

Hon. (full name)

Secretary of the Interior

Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

or

My dear Mr. (last name):

Hon. (full name)

The Attorney General

Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Attorney General:

or

My dear Mr. (last name):

*Chief Justice of the United States*

Hon. (full name)

Chief Justice of the United States

Washington 13, D. C.

My dear Mr. Chief Justice:



*Associate Justice*

Hon. (full name)  
Justice, Supreme Court of the United States  
Washington 13, D. C.

My dear Mr. Justice:

*Administrator of a Federal Agency*

Hon. (full name)  
(Name of agency)  
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Administrator:

*Head of a Government Bureau*

Hon. (full name)  
Commissioner of Patents (or Director of [name of bureau] or Chief of [name of bureau])  
Department of Commerce  
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Commissioner: (but not My dear Mr. Director, or My dear Mr. Chief)

or

My dear Mr. (last name):

*United States Senator*

Hon. (full name)  
United States Senate  
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Senator:

or

My dear Senator (last name):

*Congressman*

Hon. (full name)  
House of Representatives  
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Congressman:  
or  
My dear Mr. (last name):

*State officials**Governor*

Hon. (full name)  
Governor of New York  
Albany, New York

My dear Governor:  
or  
My dear Governor (last name):

*Lieutenant Governor*

Hon. (full name)  
Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

My dear Mr. (last name):

*Head of a State Department*

Hon. (full name)  
Secretary of State  
Springfield, Illinois

My dear Mr. (last name):

Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia are commonwealths, so their officers are addressed as Secretary of the Commonwealth, Treasurer of the Commonwealth, and so on.

*State Senator*

Hon. (full name)  
The State Senate  
Trenton, New Jersey

My dear Senator:  
or  
My dear Senator (last name):

*State Representative, Assemblyman, or Delegate*

Hon. (full name)  
House of Representatives (or The State Assembly, or  
House of Delegates)  
Boston, Massachusetts

My dear Mr. (last name):

*Judge* .

Hon. (full name)  
(Title and name of the court—*i.e.*, Chief Justice of the  
Supreme Court, or Presiding Judge of the Court of  
Appeals, etc.)  
(Name of city), (Name of state)

My dear Chief Justice (last name):  
or  
My dear Judge (last name):

*County officials*

*County Supervisor or Commissioner*

Mr. (full name)  
Supervisor, (name of county) County (or Commissioner,  
—— County)  
(Address)

My dear Mr. (last name):

For general communications:

The Board of Supervisors (or The Board of Commissioners)

—— County

(Name of city), (Name of state)

Gentlemen:

*County Clerk, Treasurer, Auditor, etc.*

Mr. (full name)

County Clerk (or County Treasurer, etc.)

(Address)

My dear Mr. (last name):

*County Sheriff*

Mr. (full name)

Sheriff, —— County

(Address)

My dear Sheriff (last name):

*District Attorney, Prosecuting Attorney, County Attorney,  
etc.*

Hon. (full name)

District Attorney (or County Attorney, etc.)

(Address)

My dear Mr. (last name):

*Judge*

(See State officials)

*Justice of the Peace*

Mr. (full name) (or Hon. [full name] if he is a judge)

Justice of the Peace

(Address)

My dear Mr. (last name):

or

My dear Judge (last name): (if he is a judge)

*Constable*

Mr. (full name), Constable

(Address)

My dear Mr. (last name):

*City and town officials*

*Mayor*

Hon. (full name)

Mayor of (name of city or town)

(Name of city or town), (Name of state)

My dear Mr. Mayor:

or

My dear Mayor (last name):

*City Manager*

Mr. (full name)

City Manager

(Name of city), (Name of state)

My dear Mr. (last name):

*Member of the City Council*

Mr. (full name)

Councilman

City Hall

(Name of city), (Name of state)

My dear Mr. (last name):

*Member of the Board of Selectmen*

Mr. (full name)

Selectman

Town Hall

(Name of town), (Name of state)

My dear Mr. (last name):

*Head of a City or Town office*

Mr. (full name)

City Clerk (or Town Clerk, or City Treasurer, etc.)

City Hall (or Town Hall)

(Name of city or town), (Name of state)

My dear Mr. (last name):

NOTE: In writing to Federal, state, county, city, or town departments for information, or on general matters, it is sufficient to address the office only. The salutation "Gentlemen:" would be used.

Division of Labor Standards

Department of Labor

Washington 25, D. C.

Gentlemen:

Board of Education

110 Livingston Street

Brooklyn, New York

Gentlemen:

*Diplomatic and commercial representatives*

*An American embassy* (where our diplomatic representative is an ambassador)

Secretary of the American Embassy

London

Great Britain

My dear Mr. Secretary:

*An American legation* (where our diplomatic representative is a minister)

Secretary of the American Legation  
Stockholm  
Sweden

My dear Mr. Secretary:

Business correspondence is more likely to be conducted with a consul, who is the commercial representative of his country.

*An American Consul*

The American Consul  
Rio de Janeiro  
Brazil

Sir:

*A Foreign Consul*

The French Consul  
178 Beacon Street  
Boston, Massachusetts

Sir:

The location of embassies, legations, and consular offices is given in the Congressional Directory. Public libraries have copies.

### **Members of the Clergy**

*Roman Catholic Church*

*Cardinal*

His Eminence (first name) Cardinal (last name) *i.e.*, His  
Eminence Francis Cardinal Connors  
(Address)

Your Eminence:

*Archbishop*

The Most Rev. (full name)

Archbishop of (name of archdiocese: Baltimore, Boston  
etc.)

(Address)

Your Excellency:

*Bishop*

The Most Rev. (full name)

Bishop of (name of diocese)

(Address)

Your Excellency:

*Monsignor*

The Rt. Rev. Msgr. (full name)

(Address)

My dear Monsignor:

*Priest*

The Rev. (full name)

(Address)

Dear Father:

or

Dear Father (last name):

*Mother Superior*

The Rev. Mother (religious name)

(Address)

Dear Reverend Mother:

or

Dear Reverend Mother (religious name):



*Sister*

Sister (religious name)  
(Address)

Dear Sister:

or

Dear Sister (religious name):

*Member of a Brotherhood*

Brother (religious name)  
(Address)

Dear Brother:

or

Dear Brother (religious name):

*Protestant Episcopal Church*

*Bishop*

The Rt. Rev. (full name)  
Bishop of (location)  
(Address)

My dear Bishop:

or

My dear Bishop (last name):

*Archdeacon*

The Venerable (full name)  
Archdeacon of (location)  
(Address)

My dear Archdeacon:

or

My dear Archdeacon (last name):

*Dean*

The Very Rev. (full name):  
Dean of (location)  
(Address)

My dear Dean:  
or  
My dear Dean (last name):

*Canon*

The Rev. (full name)  
Canon of (location)  
(Address)

My dear Canon:  
or  
My dear Canon (last name):

*Rector*

The Rev. (full name) (or Dr. [full name] if he holds the  
degree of Doctor)  
(Address)

Dear Mr. (last name):  
or  
Dear Doctor (last name): (if he holds the degree)

*Other Denominations**Methodist Bishop*

Bishop (full name)  
(Address)

My dear Bishop:  
or  
My dear Bishop (last name):

*Jewish Rabbi*

Rabbi (full name) (or Dr. [full name] if he holds the degree of Doctor)

(Address)

Dear Rabbi (last name):

or

Dear Doctor (last name): (if he holds the degree)

*Other Clergymen*

The Rev. (full name) (or Dr. [full name] if he holds the degree of Doctor)

(Address)

Dear Mr. (last name):

or

Dear Doctor (last name): (if he holds the degree)

**School officials**

*President or Chancellor of a College or University*

Dr. (full name)

President of (or Chancellor of) (name of college or university)

(Name of city), (Name of state)

My dear Doctor (last name):

*Official of a Religious School (Catholic)*

The Very Rev. (full name)

President of (name of school)

(Name of city), (Name of state)

Very Reverend dear Father:

The Official Catholic Directory, which may be found in public libraries, gives the names, addresses, and titles of all

officials and dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church. If the head of a Catholic college, university, or seminary holds a higher title than The Very Reverend, he is addressed as follows:

The Right Rev. (full name)  
President of (name of school)  
(Name of city), (Name of state)

Reverend dear Father (last name):  
(Address)

The Most Rev. (full name)  
President of (name of school)  
(Name of city), (Name of state)

Your Excellency:

*President of a Religious School (Protestant)*

The Rev. (full name) (or The Very Rev. [full name]  
if he holds the higher title)

President of ——  
(Name of city), (Name of state)

My dear President (last name):

Patterson's American Educational Directory, which may be found in public libraries, gives the names, addresses, and titles of educational officials.

*Dean*

Dean (full name)  
School of ——  
—— University  
(Address)

My dear Dean (last name):

*Professor*

Prof. (full name)  
 Department of ----  
 ---- University  
 (Address)

My dear Professor (last name):

If you know that a professor holds the title of doctor, he is addressed instead:

Dr. (full name)  
 Professor of ----  
 ---- University  
 (Address)

My dear Doctor (last name):

*State Commissioner of Education, or a State or local Superintendent of Schools*

Mr. (full name) (or Dr. [full name] if he holds the degree of Doctor)  
 Commissioner of Education (or Superintendent of ----)  
 (Address)

My dear Mr. (last name):

or

My dear Doctor (last name): (if he holds the degree)

*Principal*

Mr. (full name) (or Dr. [full name] if he holds the degree of Doctor)  
 Principal of ---- School  
 (Address)

My dear Mr. (last name):

or

My dear Doctor (last name): (if he holds the degree)

*The School Board*

The (name of city or town) School Board (or The Board  
of Education)

(Address)

Gentlemen:

*Member of the School Board*

Mr. (full name)

Member (or Clerk, Chairman, etc.), (name of city or  
town) School Board

(Address)

My dear Mr. (last name):

**Army, Navy and Marine personnel**

In the address, titles denoting the rank of an officer, or the rating of an enlisted man, may be abbreviated.

Lt. Gen.

Ens.

Pvt.

The impersonal salutation "Dear Sir:" is generally preferred in business communications for all ranks and ratings.

However, when the writer of a letter is acquainted with an officer he is more likely to address him as follows:

My dear (title spelled in full) (last name):

*i.e.*, My dear Captain Burns:

An enlisted man is addressed as Mr.

My dear Mr. Burns:

The head of an office who holds the title of Adjutant General, Judge Advocate General, Surgeon General, and so on, may be addressed by his office or by his military title and office.

The Adjutant General  
 War Department  
 Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Sir:

or

Maj. Gen. (full name) <sup>2</sup>  
 The Adjutant General  
 (Address)

My dear General (last name):

### People in foreign countries

When a business letter is written to someone in a foreign country, the foreign designation is used for Mr., Mrs., and Miss, if the entire letter is written in the other language. If the letter is written in English, the English title is used for an American, but it is respectful to use the title a foreign-born person is accustomed to in his own country.

<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Spanish</i>	<i>Portuguese</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>German</i>
Mr..... Abbreviated to . . .	Monsieur M.	Senor Sr.	Senhor	Signor Sig.	Herr
Mrs..... Abbreviated to.....	Madame Mme.	Senora Sra.	Senhora	Signora Sig.ra	Frau Fr.
Miss..... Abbreviated to... ..	Mademoiselle Mlle.	Senorita Srta.	Senhorita	Signorina Sig.na	Fraulein Frl.

The examples given do not include all the forms for addressing all types of people who have titles. This book, treating the subject of etiquette in business, would be cluttered

<sup>2</sup> Or whatever his rank may be.

if forms for sending formal invitations, for carrying on diplomatic correspondence, and for addressing royalty were added.

Books on social etiquette supply the first type. The Department of State in Washington, D. C., has its own standards, which are followed in carrying on diplomatic correspondence, and which not even other government departments generally use. Various reference books in libraries may be consulted for addressing royalty.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. In the business letter that makes a good impression, what five qualities are found?
2. If you are assistant to a busy employer, how can you relieve him of some of the burden of answering his mail?
3. If you have to wait for information from another source before you can answer a letter, what would be a thoughtful thing for you to do?
4. If a letter that should be answered by someone else in your firm is addressed to you, what should you do?
5. In what ways can you ensure the accuracy of the letter you send?
6. How did you revise the last two paragraphs on page 193 under the topic of Accuracy?
7. Compare the tone of the modern business letter with the style of 50 years ago.
8. How can good will be promoted through the tone of a letter?
9. As assigned by your instructor, write a letter covering each of the following situations:
  - a. Assume that a customer living out of town has written to your store, saying that she would like to buy a breakfast set consisting of a table and four chairs. She wants to know what you have in stock for immediate delivery.



Answer her by letter, giving descriptions, prices, and delivery days to her community.

- b. Assume that you own an auto repair shop. A man with three trucks has asked you to look them over and send him an estimate of the cost of work that should be done. You are anxious to secure his business, so you write him a letter combining your estimate with a little sales talk.

10. Make a list of the points to observe in typing an attractive letter.

11. Take as examples some typewritten letters that you, or members of your family who are in business, have received, which are of an impersonal nature. Perhaps the letters advertise something or deal with a subject that in no way concerns private matters. What can you say about these letters from the standpoint of their appearance?

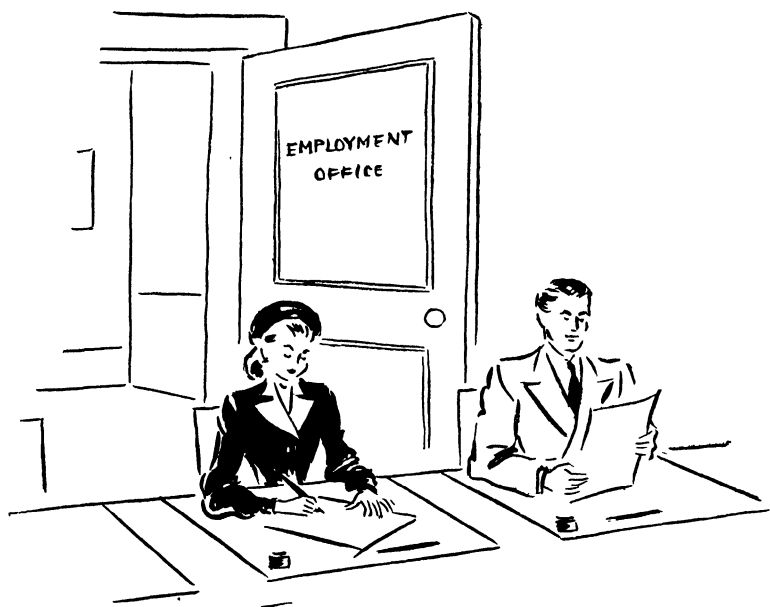
12. Rewrite and/or retype those letters which you decide could be improved.



## **Part 3**

### **Etiquette in Employer-Employee Relations**





## 11. WHEN YOU LOOK FOR A JOB

Looking for a job is one of the most exciting experiences in business. The things that an applicant sees and hears as he goes here and there to be interviewed, the situations that he must handle adroitly, and the elation that he feels when he secures the position that he wants make up an experience that may never be repeated, once he has settled into the daily routine of going to work. But however interesting all this may be, the real goal is to get a good job.

Recommendations from previous employers help, and so do references from school, but there is nothing else that equals the promising impression that an applicant makes by his politeness and his appearance.

## APPEARANCE AND DRESS

Dressing for an interview is more than a matter of putting on your hat and coat when you start off, in the morning. In some lines of business, such as buying, outside selling, and fashion work, you will find that a person is expected to dress extremely well. Although it will hurt to take money out of the bank to buy clothes when you are not working, the amount spent on a good hat or some other article of clothing to bring an outfit up to date may help you to get a particular job when the competition is keen.

In jobs where you're not expected to be a walking advertisement for the firm, there may be less emphasis on style, but the necessity of good grooming never lessens. Without qualification, employers name cleanliness as the most important point in an applicant's appearance.

Those who conduct interviews have a variety of ways of checking on this point, some of which are noted here.

In one firm employing many girls, a likely candidate is sent to the personnel manager after being screened by his assistant.

He always asks each girl as she comes into his office, "Won't you take off your coat? It's warm in here." While this is a courteous gesture, it serves another purpose. The manager is able to see whether a girl's dress is free from dandruff flecks and whether she is careful to wear dress shields.

In another firm a girl is observed as she opens her handbag, perhaps to present a newspaper advertisement or an employment agency's introduction. The interviewer feels that a girl who is tidy won't be likely to have crumpled handkerchiefs and old letters spilling out.

If you plan to do the family shopping while you're in town, either let it go until after your interview, or check your

purchases somewhere. To enter an interviewer's office with packages and paper bags will give the impression that you regard your call as incidental. The interviewer may treat it the same way.

To avoid repeating here the details of dress and good grooming in business, it is suggested to both men and women that, before they start out to look for a job, they read again the chapter, "I Want to Look Right."

### THE PREPARATION OF ONE'S PERSONAL HISTORY

In many lines of work an applicant needs to carry with him evidence of his previous experience or training. The artist has a portfolio of drawings, the advertising man has samples of work that has been turned out under his supervision, the writer keeps his work pasted in a scrapbook, the publicity agent carries a sheaf of clippings.

It strikes an interviewer as impolite when he is handed material bound between covers so frayed and loose that they hardly hold together. However interested he may be in looking over someone's work, he will scarcely like being given a torn and dirty envelope. It is worth the slight time and expense required to enclose material in a fresh covering.

Types of material widely used by applicants just out of school include diplomas, report cards, and letters of reference. In schools and colleges where the big, wall-type diploma is issued, a small card, sometimes of wallet size, is also given out so that a graduate will have evidence that is easy to carry. Some private schools have done away with the large diploma altogether. They issue, instead, one about 4 by 6 inches, which can be presented in a neat case backed by leather and having a transparent face. Whether a diploma is in your wallet or in a special case, you can be sure of showing it clean and unwrinkled when you look for a job.

Other material, such as report cards and letters of reference, should be kept in an envelope and then placed inside another envelope slightly larger. When you take the larger envelope out of your pocket or your handbag, you can quickly draw out the smaller one and hand it, free from marks, to the interviewer. Unless you have interviewed others, you may not realize what a favorable impression an applicant makes through this thoughtfulness.

#### WHEN TO TELEPHONE FOR AN APPOINTMENT

It is the general practice for a job applicant to telephone, asking for an appointment, when he is being referred to someone by a third person.

Suppose that you have been given a letter by your school principal to Mr. John Smith of the American Company.

Telephone to the American Company and ask, "May I please speak with the secretary to Mr. John Smith?" When she answers, say, "My name is James Green. I have a letter of reference addressed to Mr. Smith from Mr. Fuller, and I would appreciate it if I could make an appointment to see Mr. Smith."

If you are asked, you may explain that Mr. Fuller is the principal of the Trade School, that you are graduating next month, and so on; but it is better to keep your opening lines as brief as possible, so that the purpose of your call will be grasped easily.

You may have an indefinite contact where no time is mentioned, as when an agency tells you, "Mr. Smith at The American Company is looking for a stenographer. Here's a slip"; or when a friend tells you, "I spoke to John Smith about you and he wants you to call to see him." You will be showing consideration for Mr. Smith's time if you telephone



and ask his secretary when it will be convenient for you to call.

Notwithstanding the fact that people have had successful interviews when they have called without making an appointment in advance, the odds are in favor of the person who telephones first. For one thing, it gives an employer's secretary—or the employer himself, if he happens to answer the telephone—the opportunity of setting a day and a time that is convenient for him. If you go in unexpectedly, he may see you as a matter of courtesy, realizing that you are young and that you have probably had a long car ride into the city, but he may not be able to give you as much attention as he could have given if he had been able to set an appointment.

To telephone ahead of time also gives the impression that you are acquainted with business methods. Appointments are made not only by applicants for positions, but by salesmen and people with ideas to commercialize, whenever they have been referred to someone.

#### TAKING EQUIPMENT FOR TESTS

Since borrowing is to be avoided in business whenever possible, you will strengthen your good impression at an interview by carrying with you your own equipment for tests. If you are applying for a stenographic position, have a fountain pen for taking dictation and a typewriter eraser. To try out for a job as clerk or bookkeeper you will need at least one sharpened pencil with an eraser attached. In qualifying for some jobs, you may find it necessary to use a ruler or certain instruments during tests. If you have doubts about the type of equipment needed, your teacher or a friend who is doing the same kind of work can probably make suggestions.

When the interviewer is about to test you, show him your equipment. Then, if by chance there should be a rule against using an eraser, or if a firm wants only its own equipment to be used, you will be forewarned.

#### AT THE INTERVIEW

**Attitude.** Any employer who does much interviewing is treated to attitudes of all kinds, ranging from the gay to the gloomy, from the resentful to the fawning. The way a person feels when he seeks a job is mirrored in his conduct, from the instant that he steps inside a building.

One man's "luck" changed and he found a good position soon after he stopped showing resentment toward the world in his tactless remarks. Until he realized how he was spoiling his chances, his conversation at interviews had been well peppered with such remarks as "I went to school with that fellow. He'd still be in the first grade if his father hadn't had money to push him along," and "I know plenty of men—right here in this organization, too—who don't know the first thing about their jobs," and "I never got the breaks."

Betty was sure that women bosses were down on her because she was so pretty. She never guessed that her failure to be hired might be due to her clumsy efforts to curry favor. "I'd just love to work with an intelligent woman like you," "Pardon me, but I've been admiring your beautiful hair."

One day a friend to whom she was confiding her woes suggested that it would be more courteous not to make personal remarks. Within a week, Betty was hired (and by a woman, after all), for a pleasant job, which she still holds.

A person may find that his whole personality will seem to change when he adopts an attitude that is alert and pleasant. By his ready smile, attentive manner, and courteous answers

to the questions that are put to him, he makes the sort of impression that will help him get a job.

**Conversation and deportment.** Since reference can be made to Chapter 8 for advice regarding general problems of conversation and deportment, there are only a few specific matters that need to be mentioned here. In speaking of previous employment, it has been found that an applicant needs to use some discretion in voicing his criticism. Even when he has left a job because of conditions that were to him thoroughly unpleasant, he should be careful to mention them as briefly as possible, or even to omit them altogether if he can offer another acceptable excuse for leaving.

In the first place, the applicant doesn't know how well his prospective employer may know his previous employer. In the second place, he runs the risk of raising in the mind of the person who is interviewing him the reflections, "I wonder if this fellow is a trouble maker. He's running down every job he had; seems like a hard person to suit. Maybe he'll talk the same way about this place if he leaves."

Another breach of manners is committed by the applicant who takes charge of the conversation. It should be the other way round. The interviewer asks the questions and describes the job. Then if there are qualifications that the applicant has not had a chance to bring out, he speaks of them. To talk before being specifically questioned makes an applicant seem belligerent, when it may only be his enthusiasm that puts him in this unfavorable light.

Occasionally someone makes the mistake of relying more on his personal hard-luck story than on his qualifications for the work. Although most people have too great a sense of propriety to discuss their private affairs outside the home, interviewers will tell you that they still have to listen to an

assortment of confidences: what details lie behind a divorce; how much money an applicant owes in back bills; how hard a woman finds it to bring up her family and go to work; what a good sport a man has been about helping others, yet now that he's out of work, no one does a thing for him.

Sometimes these irrelevant recitations start early in the interview, as an attempt to arouse pity. Sometimes the person has gone along well and is about ready to clinch the job when, like Bill Brown, he spoils everything.

Bill Brown's salary had been \$10,000 a year as an executive, but he was the victim of a company shake-up and lost his job.

A friend heard that a company in—we'll say Detroit—needed a man for a big job. Bill Brown seemed to fit in with all the requirements, so his friend spoke to the company's president in the highest terms about him.

The president checked up on Bill, was satisfied with what he saw on paper, and asked the friend to have him come to Detroit for a personal interview. The job was more than half won.

Bill went from his home in New York to Detroit, was interviewed by several top executives, measured up, and was told by the president, "We think you'll do. You'll hear from us in a few days." Then Bill Brown made his mistake. He said, "Now I have to get back to New York, and I wonder if you'd lend me the fare. I've been out of work for quite a while, and my pocket-book is pretty flat."

Not only was the amount of his fare trifling in comparison with the thousands of dollars a year he would have been making, but the president shivered at the thought of the possible *faux pas* their new executive might make with clients. Would he touch them for loans?

The friend still wonders if some day he can work up enough courage to tell Bill the real reason why he didn't get the position. Bill is sure that some friend of the president had a "drag" and eased him out.

People with business experience who are trying to change their line of work are frequently faced with the delicate task of refusing politely, but conclusively, to go back to their former type of work. Instead of flatly announcing to employment interviewers, "I won't do any more bookkeeping," or "I refuse to take another job in that line," they can surely find more gracious ways of saying "No."

Dorothy D. spent 6 years in a firm as secretary, and 1 year in another firm managing their small office. When a promised salary increase failed to come through, she decided to look for another job.

There were a few large firms in her city, so she wrote a letter of application to each of them. Although in her letter she stated that she was looking for work as a department manager or supervisor, she was offered at each interview a secretarial job. The openings were all good, but they weren't what Dorothy wanted, so she would say to an interviewer, "The job you mention sounds very attractive, but I hadn't thought of doing secretarial work again."

In some cases the interviewer would press the offer, but Dorothy kept on the track she had started simply by smiling and agreeing, "Oh, yes, I'm sure it would be a pleasant job," and then adding, "but I think that probably I had better keep on in office management work, since I seem to be so well adapted to it."

Although Dorothy could have had another secretarial job, she found that, by holding out good-naturedly and tactfully, she was given consideration for other work. As a result of one of her interviews she was placed in an assistant supervisory job that gave her the opportunity for promotion that she wanted.

*Discussing the salary question.* Even when the salary has been stated in a newspaper advertisement or told to an applicant by the employment agency that acts as intermediary, it is businesslike and perfectly proper for an applicant to con-

firm it before taking the job. However, instead of saying, "The employment agency said you'd pay \$40. Is that true?" it is less blunt to ask, "The salary is \$40, isn't it?"

An applicant should hesitate before applying for a job in the hope of persuading the interviewer to increase the salary offered. This attempt to "hold me up," as the interviewer terms it, generally provokes a swift refusal, if not a complete rejection of the applicant.

Occasionally, though, when a person's qualifications are unusually good, he may be assured by the employment agency that arranged the contact, "The company is offering \$35, but they'll pay up to \$40 for the right one. See what you can do." In that case, the applicant should feel free to quote the agency's representative. After the interviewer has mentioned \$35, the applicant may say, "At the agency I was told that the job paid from \$35 to \$40. Do you suppose that I might be considered worth \$40, in view of my qualifications?"

If the agency has overreached itself, and the employer says so, the applicant can only say, "Oh, I'm very sorry, but when I told the agency I wanted \$40 that was what they told me. I didn't mean to take your time." With this apology, an applicant can leave the interview on a sincere note (and perhaps even be considered for another opening at \$40 if the firm is large enough). On his return to the agency, the applicant should explain that he was put in an embarrassing position.

Sometimes an applicant goes to an interview without knowing what salary is being offered. Perhaps no mention was made in the newspaper advertisement that he is answering. Or there may have been some phrase that had little meaning: "Salary arranged," "Salary dependent on ability," "Excellent salary." Or the applicant was put in touch with

the job through a friend who didn't know how much would be paid.

No one is ever expected to take a job without being told at the interview exactly how much money he will receive; so after all details have been discussed, the applicant should ask pleasantly, "And what is the salary, please?"

If the figure is too low, the applicant says so, politely and with no display of feeling: "I'm sorry, but the salary isn't what I expected," or, "I don't believe I'd be interested, but thank you just the same for seeing me." It may be highly dramatic to flounce out exclaiming, "I wouldn't think of working for such a pitiful sum," but it is likely to be a short-sighted attitude. In more than one case, a person who turned down an existing vacancy, but who left agreeably, was later called in for a better position.

Once in a while an unscrupulous employer will try to take advantage of a timid applicant by rushing him into a job where he is kept wondering for a week what his first pay check will be. Instead of going through all that bother, only to be disappointed, an applicant might as well summon his courage at the interview and press his questioning further if he gets no direct answer when he asks, "What is the salary, please?"

He may have to say, "Yes, sir, I could start this morning, but I'd have to know what salary I was working for," or, "Yes, thank you, I'm sure I'd like the job, but I have to know what my salary will be." By his courteous manner the applicant will not endanger his chances of getting the job if he still wants it, while at the same time he should secure the information that is due him.

If a newspaper advertisement includes, after the amount, the hopeful qualification, "to start," the applicant should go into this further: "In your advertisement the salary was given

as \$40 to start. Can you tell me when I might expect my first increase?" The interviewer in a large firm usually has an established salary scale to follow, and he can tell to the day and the dollar when and what an employee's first increase will be if his work is satisfactory.

Other employers may be less explicit in their definition of the term "to start," and the applicant will be given such answers as "I should say in a couple of months you can get a few dollars more," or "As soon as you catch onto the work you'll get an increase. It shouldn't take long—about 3 months," or "You'll get \$40 the first year, and after that we'll see how you're getting along." After such statements, it will do little good for an applicant to press for a definite amount, since the interviewer apparently has no intention of committing himself further.

Sometimes an employer hedges about the length of time that an employee needs "to start," and he will answer along vague lines: "It depends on you," or "Well, some of our people take longer than others." It has generally been found that an employer with such an attitude is a long, long time coming through with a first increase. However, an applicant may try to get some sort of commitment at the interview, because he'll have little success getting an answer once he starts on the job.

Applicants meeting such a problem have had desirable results from the following queries: "As soon as I've handled one month's trial balance alone, do you consider that I shall have passed my probationary period and shall be entitled to an increase?" "Is there a certain sales quota that the employees reach that qualifies them for a higher base rate?" "In giving me this salary to start, have you a time limit in which I'm expected to prove my ability?"



**Interviews that have succeeded.** Sometimes the qualifications of several applicants for a particular job are all nearly alike. Each one may have a fine appearance, good education, and similar experience. It's hard for an employer to decide which to choose, so he starts weighing little things carefully.

In the following cases, each applicant got the job because he took advantage of the opportunity to do some extra little thing. What he did brought out his genuine courtesy and thoughtfulness, and without further question left in the interviewer's mind, he was given the job.

About a dozen girls were applying for an excellent position that was open. Each girl tried her best to get the job, and the personnel manager was having a hard time to decide. Finally he came to Mary H.

In looking over her application blank he remarked, "Now, you live on the other side of the city. Wouldn't you find it rather hard getting back and forth to work?"

Without hesitation Mary answered, "I can make connections without any trouble. I telephoned the bus company before I came in today, and learned that I can get a bus at the corner of a street near my home every morning at about a quarter past eight. I'll ride into the terminal and connect with the city bus that goes right by your door here. Unless something unforeseen happens I'm sure of never being late for work."

In telling the president of the firm later that day that he had hired Mary H., the personnel manager said, "There's a girl who's thinking of our side of it, and knows that attendance is what we're interested in."

In another firm, the sales manager kept his office door open so that he could observe applicants when they came into the waiting room. As he had put an advertisement in the newspapers for a salesman, he was interested in seeing how the men would act as they entered an office.

Some of them slouched as they waited and these, he felt, made a poor appearance. One of them neglected to take off his hat when talking with the receptionist, so the sales manager decided not to hire him as a representative of the firm.

Just as the sales manager was about to ask the receptionist to send in the first man for an interview, he noticed the messenger girl walking through the waiting room with her arms filled with outgoing mail that she had collected. As she started to open the office gate, several envelopes slipped and fell to the floor.

Two of the men stood up and came forward, picked up the envelopes, and handed them to the girl. Since these men had been seated farthest away, it seemed to the sales manager that there was no excuse for those sitting near-by not to have done the same.

The manners of the two men when they walked into the waiting room had seemed generally pleasing, so that impression, strengthened by their unprepared act of courtesy, gave them a high score in the sales manager's opinion by the time that they met him for their interviews. As a result, one of them got the job, although some of the other men had had more years of experience.

The owner of a store had advertised for an assistant, and the response was great. All day long, he was kept interviewing, but at 4:30 P.M. he was left with a single applicant to meet, Joe R.

He had seen this young fellow waiting for a long time, and he wanted to interview him; but he also wanted to finish up a few details and take his train home.

As Joe R. stepped into the office, he said to the owner without hesitation, "I know how late it is, and you've been interviewing all day. Perhaps you'd rather I'd come back tomorrow?" He made his suggestion without bitterness of any kind over being the last to be interviewed. His smile was natural and his tone friendly.

The owner was grateful for this evidence of cooperation, and made an appointment for 9 o'clock the next morning.

Accordingly, when the owner was feeling fresh and unhurried, Joe R. was given a good interview. His qualifications were good, although no better than anyone else's, but his manner, the previous afternoon, had so impressed the owner that Joe, the final applicant, was hired in preference to all the others.

**Interviews that have failed.** Side by side with the interviews that have succeeded are those that were bound to fail. It's not always the applicant's fault. His qualifications may be good, although not quite so good as another person's. Or he may be too well qualified for the job that is open, and the interviewer is foresighted enough to know that he will not be a satisfied employee. There may be something about the applicant's physical appearance that reminds the interviewer of someone he dislikes; then, however blameless the applicant may be, the interviewer cannot overcome his prejudice. The reasons go on. Competition for a job gives the employer the opportunity to compare and eliminate all but the one candidate needed. The others inevitably lose out.

Such an experience ought not to result in a person's losing his courage. By persistently keeping at it, he'll find the right job. Then, as has happened in the cases of many, many others, the job he finally gets may be far better than any of those that he failed to get. He'll get a job, that is, if he keeps looking steadily, if he prepares for each interview with as much care as if it were his first one, if he adopts a cheerful and co-operative attitude with each interviewer.

When he feels that he is slackening and that he would rather tell someone to go fly a kite than to recount his previous experience all over again, it's time for him to take a day off and do something else besides thinking of a job. Maybe there's some work he can do around the yard, or there's a sand trap out at the golf course that he has meant to practice

on. A girl may find that cooking or a bout with the spare-room closet is just what she needs to work off her tenseness.

Anyone will hurt his chances at interviews if he starts out with a negative attitude; so, rather than spoil the day, he would do better to turn it to good advantage by relaxing. Tomorrow he should be able to approach people in the right frame of mind.

In each of the following instances, the applicant obviously started out with a chip on his shoulder. During the day he couldn't, or wouldn't, shake it off; and while he was apparently looking for a job, he was actually repulsing every possibility of securing one. These stories brought a laugh when they were repeated, but the applicants' moods were anything but jolly.

At an employment agency one young man glared at the interviewer when she suggested that he shave and get a haircut. She emphasized, "If you were going into an employer's office you'd shave, wouldn't you?" To this the young man replied, "I wouldn't bother if I wasn't sure of getting the job."

The interviewer in one firm explained the position to a girl who was applying, and then he asked her, "Perhaps you have some questions about the position?" The girl answered, "Well, I'm really looking at my watch, because I want to get over to Martin's to a dress sale."

Yet this girl telephoned twice afterward to find out whether she had been chosen for the opening, and on one of the calls she asked if the firm provided a parking space for employees' cars.

One young man of twenty who was applying for a job kept his eyes averted all during his interview.

Finally the personnel manager said, "I've noticed that, all the time I've been asking you questions, you've never once looked at me. What's the matter?" The reply came. "My eyes are tired, and I was saving them."

**Closing the interview.** It is the privilege of the interviewer to indicate that a talk is over, and it is the part of the applicant to take his leave gracefully, lest he overstay his welcome.

After matters have been discussed the interviewer may push back his chair or say something like "Well, I think I have the story," or "Thank you, Mr. Brown, for coming in." The applicant stands up and, whether he thinks he is going to be hired or not, he must always be sure to thank the person for the interview in some such terms as these:

"Thank you very much, Mr. Smith, for interviewing me."

or

"I appreciate the time you've taken to talk things over with me so thoroughly."

When an applicant who is already working and has been looking for a change has been accorded an appointment during his lunch hour, it would be courteous for him to say:

"It has been very considerate of you to see me, this noon. I hope that I haven't inconvenienced you too much."

At the close of an interview it is customary for an applicant to be told how soon a decision will probably be made about filling the job. However, when the interviewer says nothing, the applicant should feel free to ask, "Shall I telephone you later in the week?" or "Shall I hear from you by any particular date if I'm hired?"

When an applicant is told before he leaves that he does not qualify for the job, there should be no lack of courtesy in his leave taking. He is still pleasant, and he still voices his thanks for the interview.

When he is hired at an interview, he adds to his thanks any question that he may have in mind, for instance, "Thank you, Mr. Smith. When do you want me to start work?" "Why, thank you very much. Yes, I can start Monday. Shall I report

to you?" If hours and vacations had not been discussed, this is the time to find out about them.

#### AFTER THE INTERVIEW

**Notification to whoever made the interview possible.** Whether the applicant gets the job or not, he is expected to report the results to the person who sent him for the interview. If he was sent out by an employment agency, he calls up the agency from a telephone pay station immediately after his visit to the employer. This is not only etiquette, but a matter of self-interest, too, for unless the interviewer at the agency is kept abreast of developments, he will not know when an applicant has not been hired and is therefore still available for further appointments. When a person is hired, his new employer notifies the agency not to send anyone else for interviewing, but the successful applicant is expected to call up anyway to voice his thanks for the work that the agency has done in his behalf.

When an applicant is put in touch with the job through someone at school—principal, dean, vocational adviser, or a teacher—he shows the same prompt courtesy. Instead of disturbing a teacher during class hours with a telephone call, however, it is preferable to wait until school is out. Otherwise, a telephone call or a visit to his school contact should be made at once.

An interview may have been arranged through other sources. Perhaps it was through a relative, a personal friend, one's pastor, a neighbor, the parent of a school chum, or a former business associate. In any case, the applicant is expected to let a person know the outcome of his interview. Individual circumstances determine whether it is better to telephone to someone at his home in the evening or to call on him personally.

Even when an applicant has not been given the job in question he says, "I appreciate all that you've done for me." People will remember his gratitude and be likely to help him again when they can.

### LETTER WRITING

For some people, letter writing has an important place in their search for a job, while for others, little or no letter writing is required. Since the degree to which each person may need a knowledge of this subject varies, it has seemed best to include full information and leave it to the individual to decide how much of it will help him.

**The letter of application.** Generally speaking, the typewritten letter of application gives a better effect than one written by hand; that is, if the punctuation and spacing are correct, if there are no visible erasures, and if it is well balanced on the paper.

In schools and colleges there are quite often a few machines available for typing necessary correspondence after class hours. When a student has neither these facilities nor a machine of his own, he will find it worth the amount charged by a public stenographer for turning out an attractive letter of application.

*In answer to an advertisement.* Sometimes an advertisement requests, "Reply in own handwriting," in case the opening is in office work where good penmanship is necessary. The letter of application in this case should not be typewritten, but written in blue or black ink on plain white paper with a matching envelope. A smart girl will enclose with her handwritten letter a typed copy. If she has thus shown that she is a good typist, as well as energetic enough to want to make the copy, her application may be given preference over quantities of others.

When an advertisement states, "Please enclose picture, which will not be returned," it does a person little good to add a plea that the picture please be returned as "it's the only one I have." No picture of any actual value should be sent, but simply a small, inexpensive photograph made by an automatic machine.

An informal snapshot clearly showing the face may be used, but it would be in poor taste for a man to send a picture showing him with hands on hips or with his arms draped over a friend's shoulders. Among a batch of applications received by a firm there will generally be several showing girls in bathing suits. In the cold winter light of a business office, these pictures give everybody hysterics as they're passed around, but they do nothing to help an applicant get the job.

**THE OPENING PARAGRAPH.** It is sometimes a little difficult to start a letter of application. The writer wishes to impress a firm with his earnestness, but he is not sure when the opening paragraph may sound so enthusiastic as to appear insincere. Some letters that have conveyed a poor impression have begun as follows:

"Well, boss, you've found the right man for the job. Here I am raring to go."

"You need look no further. I'm the answer to your prayer."

Others started too timidly:

"I am afraid I cannot fill all the qualifications you state, but I am willing to try."

"If you think you can put up with my woeful lack of experience I should appreciate it if my application could be considered with the others that you receive."

On the other hand, letters of application that have been accepted with favor by employers show a variety of opening



sentences. In each of the following openings the applicant gained attention by stating his qualifications in a definite and simple manner:

"I believe that my experience as stylist for the Pretty Dress Company fits me for the position which you advertise."

"My training in journalism was supplemented last summer by just the kind of work specified in your advertisement."

"In addition to my high school training in mechanical drawing, I have completed an evening course in drafting in order to be prepared for the type of position which you advertise."

After the opening paragraph, the information contained in a letter of application follows orthodox lines.

A DESCRIPTION OF ONE'S EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE. Beginners generally describe their education first, for example: "I shall receive my B.A. degree from Jones College in June," or "I shall graduate from Salem High School next month." Then they give details, such as good marks or honors or the subjects in which they have majored. In the next paragraph they tell about part-time or summer work, or about extra-curricular activities that may have helped fit them for business.

People with previous experience generally tell about their work first, sometimes taking several paragraphs to give details. Then they describe their education, but not with all the details that the beginner usually finds helpful.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS, IF ANY, THAT HAVE A BEARING ON THE POSITION THAT IS BEING SOUGHT. These qualifications may include a knowledge of other languages besides English, a background that includes living or extensive travel in a foreign country where the firm has branches, experience in managing one's own business, or the acceptance for publication of free-lance writing.

THE POLITE CLOSING STATEMENT, "IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN MY QUALIFICATIONS, I SHALL BE VERY GLAD TO CALL FOR AN INTERVIEW AT YOUR CONVENIENCE." If a person is already working while applying for another job, the last three words, "at your convenience," are replaced by "any noon" or "any Tuesday or Thursday afternoon" or "any time after the first of November"—according to the individual limitations.

IN THE LOWER LEFT CORNER, WHERE IT CAN BE NOTICED READILY, ONE'S TELEPHONE NUMBER. Although the applicant expects to be out nearly every day, finishing his school term or looking for work, or perhaps engaged at his present job, someone at home who is available for answering the telephone calls may say, "I'll be glad to take a message and give it to him when he comes home." In case there is no one at home to depend on, it is better not to give a telephone number.

*To general prospects.* Anyone looking for a job that is unusual or in a specialized field frequently has to exert more energy to find what he wants than he would if his training had been along general lines.

Besides inserting advertisements in newspapers and trade magazines, taking civil service examinations, and making all the contacts that he can through his school and friends, he may write letters to firms that would be likely to have need for someone with his qualifications. The number of letters would vary, from about a dozen to perhaps several hundred, depending on the list of firms that he could accumulate.

Since this practically amounts to a direct-mail campaign, applicants have found that either of the two following methods lends a personal touch that is helpful.

1. The applicant may prepare a sample letter and have a letter shop make multigraphed copies of it. For an additional

charge, the shop will also have someone insert neatly, on the typewriter, each firm's name and address at the top of the letter.

2. He may have multigraphed copies made of a summary of his qualifications—his education, experience, and so on—but without the opening and closing phrases that complete it as a letter. He may then type a brief, individual letter to each firm and attach to it a copy of this multigraphed summary.

Other means of getting attention through the mail have been used besides letters: an imitation tear sheet as if the applicant had been described in a magazine; a booklet, each page listing additional qualifications; a well-folded broadside that tells more and more about a person as it is opened up. When done well, these forms of self-advertising have sometimes proved effective in businesses where showmanship is important; as in advertising, sales, public-relations work, radio broadcasting, and in the theater and motion-picture industries. However, in applying for a job as office manager or foreman, for instance, such means of securing attention are considered out of place.

In applying for a position of any type at all, an applicant will get no attention by sending a carbon copy of a letter, or a letter devoid of any address at the top, simply headed "Dear Sir."

The following paragraphs are taken from letters that made a good impression on the employers who received them.

"As I am greatly interested in entering the plastics field, I am submitting a description of my training as an engineer."

"Because of my training in stenography and domestic science I am submitting a description of my qualifications for a position in your Home Advisory Department."

"In reading the story of your firm in the Sunday Times it seemed to me that I might qualify for a position in the new research department that you are establishing."

The balance of a letter would follow the same outline as that given earlier under the heading, "In answer to an advertisement."

*Giving references.* IN ANSWER TO AN ADVERTISEMENT. The abbreviation "Refs." may be added at the end of an advertisement, meaning "References are required." No one is expected to send through the mails an original, signed letter of reference. Either an applicant includes the names and addresses of two or three people of whom he has asked permission, or he encloses typed or photostat copies—never originals—of any letters of reference that he may have. This is as much as a firm expects in the mail, and an applicant will not be considered in the least lacking in courtesy in not entrusting his papers to unknown hands.

TO GENERAL PROSPECTS. Names of reference are not generally given out in wholesale fashion, for while a person may be willing to be referred to to help someone who is applying for a specific job opening, he would not like his name given indiscriminately for reference.

Whenever a person has a letter of reference that, he feels, would help him if it were copied and enclosed with the applications in his general mailing list, he asks the writer first for permission to issue it in quantity.

**Following up an interview.** After an encouraging interview, it is sometimes helpful if an applicant writes a letter of thanks to the employer who talked with him. There are no definite rules that can be followed in this regard, and it has to be left to a person to decide for himself when it would be a good idea to write. The letters below are given as samples

because, when the three applicants who wrote them were hired, their employers commented on the favorable impressions made by the letters.

In each of these cases the applicant realized that he had been so well considered at his interview that it would be an evidence of good manners to thank the interviewer for having given his time. In addition, the applicant saw the chance to bring his name before the interviewer again, to emphasize the fact that he was deeply interested in the job and to show that he knew how to write a pleasing business letter.

*Samples of thank-you letters.* When interviews were held one day for the purpose of screening applicants, and those with the best qualifications were told that they would be interviewed another day by the president of the company:

Dear Mr. Brown:

Thank you very much for the time you spent today interviewing me. After hearing your explanation of the duties, I am sure that if I am hired I shall enjoy the work immensely.

I shall be looking forward to the interview with the president of your company whenever he finds it convenient.

Sincerely yours,

In the following case, the employer had said that he was interviewing at the time, although the job would not be filled for several weeks.

Dear Mr. Smith:

I want you to know how much I appreciate the time that you gave me today to describe my qualifications as a statistician.

Whenever you are ready to fill the opening I shall be glad to call on you again if you wish, or to give you additional

information that might be needed. You can reach me at (telephone number), where I am working temporarily.

Sincerely yours,

Here an applicant had been almost hired, but there was competition from another applicant who measured up well, too.

Dear Mr. Johnson:

It was most considerate of you to give me such a detailed interview this afternoon. I was glad of the opportunity to describe my school projects and to show you samples of the work that I did for our exhibit at the Industrial Exposition.

You may have noticed that most of my designs were of products similar to those you manufacture. Since that is where my interest lies I am sure that my enthusiasm for the job will never lag if I am fortunate enough to be hired to work in your firm.

As I mentioned, this afternoon, my recent examination marks make it possible for me to leave school after the fifteenth of this month and start working. Any time before then, of course, I shall be very glad to call and see you again if you wish to interview me further.

Sincerely yours,

When one is looking for a job, the opportunities for showing good manners are many. And like every other evidence of etiquette in business, they gain advantages for a person that he could never obtain in any other way.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do employers consider the most important point in an applicant's appearance? Why?

✓2. Under what circumstances is it best to telephone for an appointment for a job interview?

✓3. In what ways can you make the sort of impression at an interview that will help you get the job that you want?

✓4. What should be your attitude in speaking of previous employment? *brief-*

✓5. If you feel that an interviewer is not giving you a chance to describe your qualifications fully, should you interrupt, wait until the interviewer has finished and then speak up, or let the matter go?

6. At an interview how would you handle each of the following situations regarding the question of salary?

a. You were told at an employment agency how much the salary would be. How would you bring up the matter at the interview? If the interviewer's reply were not what you had expected, what would you do?

b. An interviewer asks you, "How much salary do you want?" How would you answer? What are the considerations that would lead you to your decision?

c. An interviewer offers you a salary that, you feel, is too low. What would be your answer?

d. You go out for an interview not knowing what the salary will be. How would you bring up the question and discuss it?

✓7. Several ways have been suggested for tactfully encouraging an interviewer to give an answer about the possibilities of promotion. What are they? Can you think of other ways?

8. Cases have been cited where applicants did some little extra thing that was not required of them, and they got the job. What genuine motives were behind these acts?

✓9. When an interviewer indicates that the talk is over, now should you take your leave?

✓10. If you are not told at the close of an interview whether or not you have been hired, how can you bring up the matter?

✓11. What courtesy is expected of you after you leave an interviewer's office?

✓12. Should a letter of application for a job be typewritten or handwritten? Are there exceptions?

✓13. When should you give references in a letter? Should you do it by enclosing the original letters, by enclosing copies of the letters, or by giving names only?

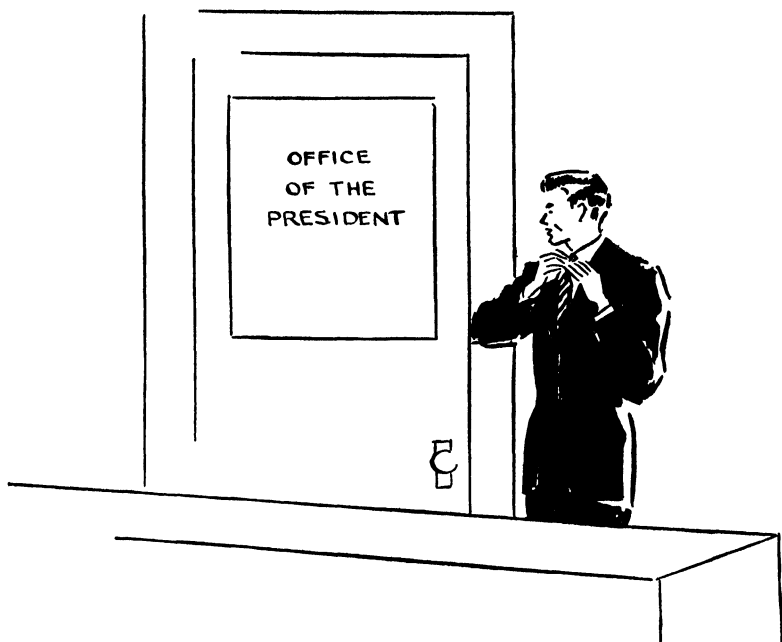
14. As directed by your instructor, write a sample letter of application to any local firm where you would like to work. Compose the letter as if you were actually applying for a job that you would be qualified to fill upon graduation.

15. For further practice, write a sample letter to a firm, also of your own choosing, as if you were applying for a temporary job during the summer months.

16. As directed by your instructor, students may take the parts of job applicants and of interviewers in the following examples:

- a. An employment agency has referred recent school graduates to the local office of the electric-light company. One opening is for a young man for an office position; another opening is for a girl to train to be a lecturer-demonstrator of their household appliances.
- b. Your vocational adviser or dean has referred a student to the owner of a local store (fill in the name of someone you have heard of in your community) to apply for a part-time selling position.
- c. A neighbor has referred a secretarial student to a local lawyer who needs someone to work in his office temporarily while his secretary is on her summer vacation.





## **12. PERSONAL PROGRESS**

### **ASKING FOR A RAISE**

Making a request for a raise means so much to an individual's self-respect, as well as to his pocketbook, that he is sometimes likely to present his arguments from an emotional standpoint, taking a position that carries no weight with the superior who interviews him. The employee's feeling of being treated unfairly may be a good thing in the beginning, to goad him into thinking about getting an increase; but when he actually presents his case, a rational review of the situation and a calm, confident manner will serve him to far better advantage.

For those who are unfamiliar with personnel and salary

administration, it may be well to mention that, in the matter of granting increases, firms are divided into two general categories: (1) those which pay each employee a definite amount according to wage scales that have already been set up, with increases granted automatically—usually once a year—until a certain maximum is reached; and (2) those which make a rough determination of what a job is worth and try to keep near that figure.

Without collecting statistics on the subject, it is safe to say that the very large firms, with thousands of persons on their pay rolls, are included in the first group. Many other firms, not so large, but nevertheless with hundreds of employees, have also found that the only way they can know where they stand in the matter of salaries is to set up scales and stick to them.

Although various circumstances in the last few years have increased the trend among small firms toward regimentation in business matters, it is still true that in this group the boss is likely to settle each salary case individually.

Without discussing the good and bad features of either practice, which is a subject beyond the scope of this book, we'll concern ourselves with the question of asking for a raise under conditions in both types of firms, as employees find them.

**When you are probably justified in asking.** In order to help save you the agony of wondering whether you are justified in asking for a raise, as well as the embarrassment of being refused one on grounds of insufficient evidence, the following situations are given as generally recognized for making the request:

1. *You work in a firm, perhaps a very large one, where increases are given automatically, and you are passed by when the time comes for you to receive your increase. Since there*

are conditions governing even the "automatic" raise, you should consider, before speaking to your superior, the possible reasons for having been by-passed. Perhaps you have already reached the maximum amount that is paid for the particular job you are holding. Perhaps the firm has stopped giving increases except in cases of promotion or unusual ability. Your attendance record may be poor. Or perhaps your work is not up to standard.

After you have considered reasons such as these and have failed to see how any of them could apply in your situation, you should not be hesitant about discussing your disappointment with your superior.

2. *When someone holding a higher position than yours was out ill, you were asked to fill his place. That was several months ago. The person has not returned to work and you have heard that he is not coming back at all, yet nothing has been said to you about increasing your salary and giving you the title to that job you have been filling.* There may be various reasons why you have not been given more money. The first—and the one that applies in many cases of a delayed raise—is management's natural reluctance to pay more than it is required to. For every week that it can save the sick person's salary and still have the work done on your salary, the firm is the gainer.

However, there are other reasons why an increase is not given in a situation of this kind. You might as well face them and see how you stand before bringing the issue to a head and hearing the boss state them. If you expect the salary that your predecessor received, are you doing the job every bit as well as he did it? Or considering your worth to the firm before this change took place, and considering the value of your predecessor to the firm when he was there, are you actually worth proportionately more now than formerly, so that

you are justified in asking for the \$5, \$10, \$25, or more a week that you have in mind?

If you feel that you can answer the boss's blunt questioning along these lines with well-considered facts, you are probably prepared to talk with him.

3. *You have gradually taken on extra duties, in the course of your work.* If you have been with a firm but a short time, it is likely that these extra duties are part of the job that you were expected to perform when you were hired. If that is the case, you have been overpaid until now.

When you have been with a firm 3 or 4 months, you should begin to learn enough about the business to know when your added duties are an extra load not originally intended as part of your job. The longer you work, the more information you will probably glean that will enable you to judge fairly accurately when you are being imposed upon.

In many jobs the duties may change, over a period of time, but they do not increase; or an extra little task may be added now and then that cannot very well be considered a burden. Management does not recognize such variations in the work as worthy of an increase.

However, when three people are left to handle the volume of work formerly handled by five, or when someone who was hired to work for one boss finds that several relatives have put in an appearance and are demanding his services, or when a person can enumerate one after another a number of extra duties that have fallen to his lot since he was last given a raise, it is not considered out of the way for him to seek more money.

4. *The volume of your duties has not increased, but you are doing your work better and relieving your superior of the necessity of checking what you have done.* This is a situation

that will call for your most tactful presentation. You may know, for instance, that the boss has grown to depend on you so fully that he can leave the office and all the work in your hands and go off to the ball game every afternoon. However, a reminder that this is so isn't quite the way to get a raise. Instead, you will do better to speak of "my great interest in the work, which has resulted in my ability to understand the various details of the job," or of "my aptitude for the work, which makes it possible for me to turn out such-and-such amounts of work."

If you are in a department with others, you will find that it makes a better impression on a superior for you to dwell on your own abilities and the taking over of various duties, without making any reference to those who are slackers and who have shifted all their work onto you, and so on and so on.

5. Circumstances surrounding your job have changed since you were hired, and they are causing you additional expense. Perhaps a change in your hours means that you have an extra meal to buy in a restaurant. Maybe you have been transferred to a new locality, where living expenses are higher. The longer you wait before speaking about these extra expenses, the less advantageous it will be for you. For one thing, if you let weeks go by and then bring up the matter of money, the management will think that if you were really much concerned, you would have said something sooner. Also, the longer you wait, the more upset you are likely to become over the injustice of shouldering these expenses; and when you finally do speak about them, you may have a hard time disguising your feelings.

6. You are increasing your firm's business. Perhaps you are making more sales or building up a clientele of steady customers or going out of your way to give the public the

extra service that means good will. Depending on your type of work, there may be other ways in which your firm is profiting by your efforts, in excess of their expectations.

With the great variety of conditions under which people work, to say nothing of the variety of jobs, there are no doubt other situations where you may be likely to give some thought to the matter of a raise. As for finally deciding whether or not you are justified in asking for one, you will find that by thinking the matter over carefully, preferably writing down your reasons as they occur to you, you should arrive at a somewhat fair estimate of your position. Then, the more alert you have been to such factors as general business conditions, living and business costs in your locality, employment—or unemployment—in your line of work, the better equipped you will be to judge your worth from the hard, practical viewpoint of an employer.

With the assurance in your mind that you have grounds for asking for a raise, you have overcome the first hurdle by attaining poise for approaching the boss.

**The time to ask.** The time to ask for a raise is after you have had a chance to think it over. The day that automatic raises are given out, if you're passed by, is not the day for speaking up. You'll make a poor showing by sputtering; if you're a girl, probably by crying. Wait until the next day, when you will have calmed down and can give your employer reason to think that here's a smart, businesslike employee, who deserves to be listened to seriously.

Talk to the boss when you know by heart just what your extra duties are or what extra volume of business you've brought in. It's worth waiting a few days to think over your facts, so that when you discuss them you can do so pleasantly and logically. A bitter tone sometimes sounds insulting, and

you wouldn't wish to convey such an attitude, however unintentionally.

**The way to ask.** As for asking in person or by letter, the former method is generally preferable.

*In person.* You have the chance to make a good impression by your neat appearance and sincere manner; to clear up any questions that the boss may ask; and, if you are denied a raise, to learn why.

If the person you need to see is in his office most of the time, you might write him a note asking when you may see him for a few minutes on a personal matter. He will probably guess what the "personal matter" is, but if you should merely ask to "see him," without further explanation, he might think that it had something to do with the work you were on at the moment, and he would probably come out to see you in the general area, where others were around.

If he has a secretary, you may make the request through her, smiling pleasantly and asking, "Will you please let me know when I may see Mr. Smith? I'd like to discuss something with him personally." If she tries to fill her job to the last detail by asking just what it is that you want to discuss, simply repeat agreeably, "It's a personal matter." If you are not given an appointment within a day or two and you know that the person is in his office, go to his secretary again and repeat your request to see him. (Since you should be trying to see the superior immediately over you, you will seldom run into much difficulty on this score.)

For details concerning etiquette when calling on someone, it is suggested here that reference be made to the discussion under the headings, "Calling on an individual" and "Within your own company," in Chapter 8.

Once seated, you will be expected to state the reason for

your call. This should be done briefly and clearly, but in such a way that the request is not lacking in graciousness.

The way will not be made easy for you. When you have started by saying, "I came in to speak to you about my work, Mr. Smith," don't be surprised if Mr. Smith waits for you to go on, without giving even a "Yes?" to help the conversation along. Or you may say politely, "I hope you're not too busy, Mr. Jones. I should like to speak about my salary," and in reply you get from Mr. Jones a sour, "Well, what about it?"

The telephone will ring, not once but a million times. Someone from down the hall will come bouncing in with a piece of news. The boss will shuffle papers around and cough and scowl in his irritation over being asked for money. Through all these possible disturbances, however, keep your resolve to remain thoroughly pleasant and, to all outward appearances at least, thoroughly at ease.

*By letter.* Perhaps you work in a firm's branch location, or you travel all the time, and your superior is in the main office in a distant city. You are the one who can best judge whether to wait and talk with him personally when you happen to see him or whether to write him a letter asking for a raise.

If you decide to write, take the same care in drafting a letter that you would in preparing for a personal interview.

You will be tempted to dash off a sharp note the very day you learn that someone who is doing a job similar to yours is getting more money; but don't do that. Instead, go over the matter in your mind carefully, give yourself a chance to think of arguments that may not have occurred to you in the first flash, and take time to eliminate the phrases that, on sober thought, are not so smart. By waiting, you will be able to compose a letter that is as convincing, polite, and businesslike as it should be.



**Speak to more than one superior?** A question that sometimes confronts a person is whether or not to go over the head of his superior, who has denied him a raise, and appeal to someone in a higher position.

This has generally been found an unwise thing to do, and for several reasons. A firm's administration is supposedly set up to handle problems in a prescribed manner, and for an employee to feel that an exception is in order is a reflection on the management as a whole. The higher executive will ask the immediate superior for his side of the story before granting a raise, anyway, and when someone has had his authority flouted by one of his employees he may give the poorest recommendation possible. There is always a strained relationship afterward between the employee and the immediate superior whose decision he disregarded.

Unfortunately, however, there is no denying the fact that, under some people with authority, only a few favored employees are ever given recognition for their work.

When an employee has already been refused an increase by an immediate superior of this type, and he still feels after careful consideration that he has not been treated justly, he might as well present his case to a higher executive. In the large firm he might prefer to go to the personnel department, especially if he had found someone there sympathetic in the past toward other problems. It will be fairer both to himself and to the organization to have the matter straightened out definitely than for him to be beset by a feeling of frustration that will eventually lower his work output and make him a less valuable employee.

Before approaching someone else, however, the employee should be sure to tell his superior what he intends to do. He might simply say pleasantly, and with no trace of resentment, "Mr. Smith, I've thought over your answer to my request for

a raise, but I'm still not satisfied. I want to let you know that I plan to see Mr. Brown."

#### ASKING FOR A TRANSFER

As in asking for a raise, there must be some facts to back up the request for a transfer. Depending on your individual circumstances, one or more of the following avenues of approach may be open to you if you are seeking a change.

Explain to your employer how you will be of more use to the firm doing another type of work.

Bring up the fact that you know the advantages to the company of promotion from within and that you will be bringing to the new job your experience with the firm.

If you decide to take an evening course or courses that will help to fit you for the type of work you would like to go into, let your employer, and other executives too, know why you are doing it. An opening may occur while you are in the midst of your training, and the firm will be glad to know of someone right at hand who can be tried out for the new work. If you don't speak up until you have finished your training, the firm may have gone outside and hired someone for a vacancy, and you won't even know about the possible opportunity that you missed until you see the newcomer filling the job.

Have a talk with your superior as soon as you decide that you want a transfer, even though nothing is open. Then, if an opening should occur and you speak to him again with that fact definitely in mind, the news won't find him unprepared to fill the vacancy that your leaving would cause him. If he has known for some time that your ultimate ambition is for another type of work in the firm and that he will have to lose your services eventually, he should have given some

thought to a replacement of your present position when you are transferred.

Your desire for a transfer may be due less to a desire to better yourself than to a wish to get away from your present boss or coworkers and to work in some other part of the firm. In a firm with more than one department, in approaching your boss, you may say that you find your present type of work uncongenial and that you'd like a change. Without telling him that it is he or the person at the adjacent desk who is making the work uncongenial, you can give the impression that you just wish for a change of environment.

For instance, if you have been checking insurance applications for the last 2 years, you can say to your superior, "I've been on this type of work for 2 years now, and I feel that I must make a change. . . . With my knowledge of rates, I should be useful somewhere else in the firm, perhaps in the auditing or the sales department. . . . Well, thank you, but I'm afraid that taking another job right here would still seem like the same thing, and I really want a change."

Whatever your reason for wanting a transfer, the result may not be forthcoming. Perhaps your boss finds you a valuable employee and doesn't want to lose you, so he forgets about your request and considers that every week longer he can keep you will be that much better for him and for the department. Perhaps he considers it a sign of his weakness as an administrator if he has to go to the personnel department and admit that one of his employees has asked for a transfer. Perhaps all the department heads have been told by top management that they must cut down on their budgets and that no replacements may be hired for anyone who leaves or transfers. The reasons might go on and on, some of them even complicated and full of office politics, although none of them is apparent to the average employee. At any rate, it

may happen in your case that the boss will make no effort to get you a transfer.

If he had made the mistake of falsely encouraging you, with "Oh, yes, I'll see what I can do," when you asked him for a transfer, you are not likely to guess his real attitude. You're in the same position that you would be if his encouragement had been sincere, so you have every right to work on that premise.

About a month after your initial request, or earlier if you learn of an opening in another department that you feel you can fill, go to your boss again. Ask him, just as agreeably as you did the first time, if he has heard of an opening that you might fill or tell him about the opening of which you have heard. During this second interview you may finally be told why there is no possibility of a transfer. Even another evasive answer should help you realize where you stand on the matter.

On the other hand, you may be told of certain progress that your boss has made toward arranging a transfer; you may be reminded that patience must be exercised before a place can be found for you. After all, a firm's primary concern, and responsibility to the public is to get its work turned out. The employees' personal preferences are never disregarded by an intelligent management, but neither can they be made the ruling factor.

However, if you have reason to feel that transfers are possible in your firm, but hopeless as far as dealing with your own boss is concerned, you may be fortunate enough to have recourse to other sources. There may be a personnel department where employees can find sympathetic cooperation. Or perhaps there is an executive who, you feel, is approachable and influential. Or you may know the head of another de-

partment or group well enough to speak to him directly and ask to be considered for an opening.

Just as in the matter of asking for a raise, however, ethical business practice requires that when you seek a transfer you must tell your present boss of your intention to go to someone else over his head.

#### WHEN YOU INTEND TO LEAVE A JOB

If you are holding a permanent job and you intend to leave it, you will be expected to give notice to your employer 2 weeks in advance. If yours is a position of authority or one where special skills are required, it may not be easy for the management to replace you. Under these circumstances, it will be appreciated if you give your notice more than 2 weeks in advance, even as much as a month ahead of the date on which you plan to leave.

Among those experienced in personnel work, it is well known that, when an employee terminates without another job lined up, the reason he gives is quite often not his real one. Not wishing to enter into a long discussion—or “exit interview,” as it is termed on the records—he says something general like “needing a change” or “wanting to look for a position offering more responsibility.” As long as he doesn’t care to tell the management the story behind his dissatisfaction, he should not tell anyone else either. It shows not only lack of etiquette, but lack of a sense of loyalty, to say one thing to the boss and whisper something else to the gang. Whatever excuse is given officially for leaving a job should be the only explanation mentioned outside one’s family.

**The letter of recommendation.** The usefulness of the letter of recommendation is open to question. If a person remains in the same city, he may find that such a letter carries little weight, since prospective employers can pick up the tele-

phone and do all the checking they need. If a person moves away, he will find that the people who interview him will still check directly, as a matter of routine, by writing to his previous employers.

However, there are occasions when a letter containing compliments and a detailed explanation of a person's qualifications has been of some value; in contrast, the letter written in a brief or stilted manner and containing only faint praise has hurt more than it has helped.

It is not unusual for an employer, when asked for a letter of recommendation, to say, "Sure, I'll be glad to give you one. Why don't you just write it up and I'll sign it." Although it may prove slightly embarrassing to draw up a letter praising oneself, an employee would be unnecessarily modest not to make the most of his opportunity and prepare the best letter that he can.

When the employer writes the letter of his own accord, the employee accepts it, thanks his employer, and hopes that the recommendation is written in a cordial and complimentary vein. The letter is kept in a plain envelope, and left unsealed.

The following two letters are given here only as guides, since individual circumstances will require that the details be changed.

(Date)

To Whom It May Concern:

Without hesitation I can recommend the bearer of this letter, Mr. John J. Smith, as a loyal and conscientious employee.

For three years he was assistant superintendent of my brother's cleaning and dyeing firm. Owing to the recent death of my brother, the family has sold the firm, so that it is with regret we can no longer use Mr. Smith's services.

Mr. Smith has a thorough knowledge of the duties in a cleaning and dyeing establishment handling a high grade of work. My late brother's shop was situated near the finest residential section of Bolton, and it was Mr. Smith's responsibility to see that the work turned out by the shop employees was the very best and that expensive articles were handled with the proper care.

I know that my brother tried out several men for the job of assistant superintendent before hiring Mr. Smith, but after giving him a trial he was completely satisfied.

If you wish to communicate with me further I shall be very glad to answer any questions that I can about Mr. Smith's ability.

(Signature, without a  
complimentary close)

(Date)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am able to speak most highly of the bearer of this letter, Mr. William T. Jones.

For five years he has taken care of all my financial records. This has included maintaining my personal journal and ledger and two checking accounts, handling the pay roll for my household and office employees, supervising the clerical work necessary for sending out bills and making collections, and doing all my tax work.

My records have been checked semiannually by an auditing firm, and not only have they always been in good order but the auditor has spoken in a complimentary manner of the extra care Mr. Jones takes to itemize his entries so that they are easily understood for future reference.

I have increased Mr. Jones' salary twice, until he is now receiving the maximum amount that I can afford to pay. Therefore, it is with regret that I must lose his valuable services, but a young man of his ability and energy needs the opportunity to get ahead in the business world that I cannot provide.

Please feel free to write or telephone me at any time, if you feel that there is further information I can give you.

(Signature, without a  
complimentary close)

#### WORKING CONSTANTLY WITH SOMEONE WE DISLIKE

Sometimes we dislike a person at work because we try too hard not to. There may have been some clash of personalities at our first meeting, or in the course of our work some unpleasant incident or mistake may have occurred. Instead of forgetting what happened, we made too much recognition of such a small matter; we worried about it and even made the mistake of talking about it to others. In no time at all, our little difficulty has grown into a barrier that now seems to require all our time in breaking down.

We have given our emotions too much play-up to this point, but it isn't too late to adopt different tactics. The right tactics are easy to follow, and it has been proved that they will relieve the tension which at present makes our working days harder than they should be.

**Perhaps we need to relax generally.** Instead of twitching every time that fellow scrapes his chair along the floor, and instead of making our dislike of him so evident, we'll find that if we get more sleep or more play or a new subject to occupy our mind, we won't notice that chair scraping half as much as we do now.



**We want to lose our interest in him.** Starting today, we're not going to spend any more time thinking about him. We're through with wondering how much salary he gets, keeping tabs on the work he does or doesn't turn out, comparing his looks with ours, wondering where he gets all those new clothes. We're going to do one of the politest things anyone can do—mind our own business.

**Absolute perfection does not exist in anyone, so we're going to stop looking for it.** If we have set up in our minds a picture of exactly how John Smith ought to be, we might as well forget all about it. In the first place, no one conforms to the pattern that others may make for him, and in the second place we have no right to make such extreme demands.

The foregoing may seem like a lazy man's approach to the problem of the irksome companion: We relax, lose our interest, stop looking for perfection. Actually, however, it is a pleasant and practical way of helping to overcome dislike of a person. Working with others calls for adjustment and compromise; and the sooner this can be effected, the happier will be the atmosphere for all concerned.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

✓1. If you should ask your employer for a raise and be refused, should you ask him why he cannot give you a raise? give your notice to leave? think the matter over and see how you can perform your work so that you will feel justified in asking again at some future time? talk it over with your friends? spend your time worrying over it? look for another job? take evening courses in the hopes of getting ahead?

✓2. What are the factors in the operation of a business that an employee needs to appreciate, which may make it inexpedient to grant a raise even though it may be deserved?

✓3. Are you likely to have a more satisfactory interview with

your employer if you discuss the matter of a raise the first time you think of it, or if you wait? Explain why.

✓4. Compare the relative advantages of asking in person and asking by letter.

5. Where else in this book will you find material that will help you make a good impression if you decide to go in and see your employer about a raise or a transfer?

✓6. When you feel it necessary to speak to someone other than your employer about the question of a raise or a transfer, what does ethical business practice require that you do?

✓7. In seeking a transfer, how can you indicate to your employer that you are considering the advantages to him and to the firm, as well as to yourself?

✓8. How can you tactfully ask your employer for a transfer when it is he who makes your work uncongenial?

✓9. If you are encouraged by your employer into thinking that your request for a transfer may be granted, and time passes without results, what is your next step?

10. In the matter of placing people in the jobs they prefer, what facts have to be taken into consideration?

✓11. If you intend to leave a job, how much notice should you give? What other evidence of etiquette would be expected of you?

✓12. How can one's early dislike of some coworker be prevented from growing?

✓13. If you find that someone's presence has grown extremely disturbing, how can you adjust yourself to the situation?

14. If you have had work experience, tell how you may have solved a situation where a person or a condition had become extremely disturbing?



### **13. SECRETARIES HAVE ASKED ME**

#### **GIVING PERSONAL ATTENTION BUT KEEPING IT IMPERSONAL**

**QUESTION:** I have just received a promotion and, instead of working as stenographer in my firm's general office, I am now secretary to the manager. Since he never had a secretary before, there is no example for me to follow.

Besides carrying out the mechanics of the job, such as dictation and typing and filing, how can I be of service to him in extra ways? I don't want to seem lazy, when the fact is I don't know what personal attention to give.

ANSWER: Besides the mechanics of the job that you mention, there is a great deal to know about receiving callers graciously and handling telephone calls in such a way as to make friends for your employer. In your relations, too, with the people inside the firm, you are no longer thought of as an individual but you are now identified in their minds with your employer.

As for giving him direct, personal attention, the important point to remember is that the attention is to be given in an impersonal manner. The following list includes duties that experienced secretaries have found were expected of them. As you learn more about your employer's work and the way he likes to have things done, you will be able to expand this list to suit him.

1. Fill his desk pen and sharpen his pencils once a day. By doing this when he is out of his office, you will spare him interruption.

2. About once a week, see if his desk supplies need replenishing. Such supplies include rubber bands, paper clips, pads of paper, small blotters, and pencils. When his desk blotter needs to be changed, turn it over or put on a fresh one.

3. If one of your duties is to balance his check book every month, treat the work with as little curiosity as possible. When you have a question to take up with him, show no more than the polite sort of interest you would take in one of the firm's dull old accounts.

4. If he goes on a business trip, secure complete information for him in advance and make his reservations as he directs. (Information is given in the chapter, *Traveling on Business*, under the heading, "Reservations.")

5. Without bothering your employer with questions, try to keep alert to the work that he is doing. You can learn

much by taking an interest in his correspondence, and not just by transcribing his letters without thinking about them; by remembering names of people he does business with, and by studying the sales literature and other reading material around the office. You will find it easier to understand what your employer tells you, and, in consequence, he will feel inclined to entrust you with an increasing amount of responsibility.

6. When he is expecting a visitor, going to a business meeting, or going out on a business call, he will find it helpful if you have gathered necessary material from the files or elsewhere in the office that he might take with him.

7. See that nothing is sidetracked by the pressure of business. This means keeping a record of your employer's appointments, and reminding him of those that he must keep outside; maintaining a record of the whereabouts of drawings, layouts, engravers' cuts, copy, proofs, photographs, and all such material that may be used for advertising or other printing purposes; keeping a record of material that is borrowed from the files, and checking on it when it is not returned as promised.

8. He will appreciate it when you show an interest in the firm's business by bringing in newspaper and magazine clippings that you think he might like to read.

### INTERRUPTIONS

QUESTION: When a person in the firm asks me to get something in my employer's office at a time when my employer is having a meeting or is talking with a visitor, what should I do?

ANSWER: In general, a secretary says, "I'm sorry, but Mr. Smith is having a meeting in his office. As soon as it's over

I'll get the book for you," or "Mr. Smith has a visitor, but I think he'll be free in a few minutes and then I can go in."

Exceptions are made with discretion, as when your employer's meeting is one that you know can be interrupted without anyone's being bothered; when the visitor is a friend who comes in almost daily and stays for an hour at a time; when a request is urgent, or when it comes from your employer's superior in office.

QUESTION: So many matters come up during the day, I have to go in to see my employer frequently. I feel that he is annoyed with these interruptions; but if he doesn't know what is going on, he will be annoyed too. What can I do?

ANSWER: No one can make out a schedule for a secretary without knowing all about her work; but if your frequent trips seem to be annoying, there may be some way of cutting down on them.

Unless your employer wants a certain letter or piece of work typed and taken in to him at once, keep your work together as you finish it and carry it in near the end of the day. Make this trip in time for him to read and sign the letters. If you have a considerable amount of work finished at noon, place it on his desk when he is out at lunch.

Secretaries generally feel no need of reporting everything that goes on, for that would be gossiping. If your employer wants to hear about details in connection with his work, you might save them for your morning trip with the mail.

Necessary interruptions include the announcing of callers and the delivery of telegrams, air-mail letters, and special-delivery letters. When regular mail comes in during the day, it also is taken in, except that advertisements and routine letters—such as acknowledgments of orders—can wait until you have some other reason for going into the office.

## DURING DICTATION

**QUESTION:** I am taking my first job soon as a secretary, and several questions bother me regarding etiquette during dictation.

First, when I don't understand something that my employer says while he is dictating, should I interrupt him that instant or wait until he comes to the end of a letter?

**ANSWER:** Secretaries find it best to wait until the end of a letter; if the letter is very long, they wait until an employer has finished one portion of it. Say, "I'm sorry, but I didn't understand the word after —" or "Will you please repeat the rest of the sentence after —?"

As you become familiar with the work and with your employer's manner of speech, you will have less difficulty in understanding him than you may have had at first. It may be, too, that you sometimes can find the missing words by referring to the correspondence that your employer has put aside in his filing tray for you.

**QUESTION:** When my employer does not give me complete directions regarding his dictated material—telling me how many carbon copies to make or whether he wishes a "rush" letter to be typed at once and mailed ahead of the other letters or to be sent by air mail—when should I check with him? Will he think me stupid for not being able to decide these things by myself?

**ANSWER:** If you think of the question before he starts dictating on another subject, ask him then. Otherwise, save your question or questions until the end of the dictation period.

As you gain experience in your job you may be able to settle some of these matters for yourself without hesitation. However, don't take a chance on any that are doubtful, but ask, as all experienced girls do.

**QUESTION:** When my employer pauses, and seems to be groping for a word or trying to recall facts, should I speak up and try to help him when I think I can?

**ANSWER:** Unless he glances at you or asks you for help, it would be better to say nothing. With all your good intentions, you might not suggest the exact word he wanted, and then he might have a hard time collecting his thoughts after the interruption.

When, however, he pauses to recall facts—if you have a good memory and his is poor—it would be helpful for you to speak up; but don't feel hurt if he looks through his desk or asks you to refer to the files to make sure that your information is correct. In business one can't be too certain.

**QUESTION:** The first time I go in for dictation at my new job, shall I wait until my employer asks me to sit down or shall I take a chair near him without waiting?

**ANSWER:** On your first day, it would be the part of good manners to ask, "Which chair would you like me to take?" Many people who dictate have a habit of turning away from their desks and looking out a window or at a space in the room, and you will need to sit where it will be most convenient for you both.

#### WORKING FOR MORE THAN ONE EMPLOYER

**QUESTION:** I am secretary to three men in a professional office. I am not overworked and things go along smoothly, except when they all want their letters finished at once. What is the most agreeable way to handle the situation?

**ANSWER:** Show your cooperation by putting the question of precedence up to each one. When they decide whose work shall come first, they can hold no hard feelings toward you.

Say to the men who come second and third with their rush work, "I have about an hour's work to do, getting out Mr. A's



letters; will it be all right if I do yours after that?" or "I have quite a bit of work to do for Mr. A, but perhaps he will tell you whether some of it can be put aside?"

If Mr. B or Mr. C wants only a telegram or a short note sent, it would perhaps be possible for you to interrupt Mr. A's work and take care of the request. As soon as you had finished, you would go right ahead with Mr. A's work, without inconvenience from the few minutes' delay.

QUESTION: I am secretary to two partners in a small firm. What should I do when one of the men tells me to do a task one way and his partner comes to my desk later and tells me to do it another way?

ANSWER: Tell the second partner about the instructions that have already been given to you. You can do this without a hint of criticism toward the first man by speaking in a pleasant, matter-of-fact way.

It often happens that a second person will give directions because he doesn't know that they have already been given, and he may say, "Oh, I didn't know that Mr. Jones was taking care of this. Go right ahead the way he told you." If, however, he should disagree, you can say, "Well, what shall I do? Mr. Jones will expect me to have done such-and-such." The second man may then take the matter up with his partner and together they will arrive at a decision and tell you what to do.

If he becomes disagreeable and insists that you do the job his way and never mind Mr. Jones, you will have to remain in doubtful silence; but it would be better not to go ahead with the task until you had seen Mr. Jones and told him of the countersuggestion. Although tattling is at all times to be avoided, you have no choice in such a case, because whichever way you might choose, you would be disobeying one of your employers.

MAINTENANCE OF AN EMPLOYER'S MAILING LIST FOR  
CHRISTMAS CARDS, PRESENTS, AND CHARITABLE  
DONATIONS

QUESTION: I act as nurse and secretary for my husband, who is a doctor. As a result of our having many business and personal friends, we have built up a considerable list of those to whom we send Christmas cards. Then there is another group to whom we send presents. We also make a number of charitable contributions, and this calls for more records.

I have been so pressed with everyday duties that I have neglected my lists until they are now in poor shape, with names crossed out or squeezed in, changed addresses written in the margin, names on scraps of paper, and notations in the telephone book. Through my lack of system I overlooked some people last Christmas, and I am afraid that they may think it was done intentionally. How can I establish a system for keeping these records in perpetually readable condition?

ANSWER: Secretaries have found that an easy way to handle this problem is to establish a card file. You can buy a supply of cards 3 by 5 inches in size, with lines; a box into which they will fit; and several pieces of heavy cardboard for dividing the cards into three sections.

In one section each card would contain a name and the address of someone to whom you wish to send a Christmas card. This section may require several hundred cards, but they will not take very much room.

Another section would be for those to whom you send presents. Besides the name and address, you might include the amount that you spent last year for each one, and what the article was—if you still remember. This will make your budgeting easier next time, as well as prevent possible duplication of gifts. Each year draw a line through the previous entry and write the new article and amount.

In this section, include those to whom you and your husband give tips. One secretary remembers that her employer went home on Christmas Eve with less than a dollar in his pocket after his annual Christmas tipping had caught him unprepared.

The third section of your file will be for charitable donations. On each card write the name of the person or organization to whom the check is made out, the address, the name of the individual to whose attention it should be mailed, and the amount that you gave last year. If you make donations during the year, include the date with each entry.

At the back of the three sections, a supply of blank cards can be kept on which to write new names, but it would be a waste of time to make out a new card whenever a change could be made on one of those already filed. Corrections will not look unsightly if the writing or typing is done in orderly fashion on the lines. Buy a file box of a length that will fit into one of the top drawers of your desk, and you will have a handy reference at all times. Sometimes a secretary keeps a file of this kind on top of her desk, but it is safer not to leave such confidential information exposed.

#### MAINTENANCE OF A CALENDAR OF BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, AND SPECIAL DATES TO BE REMEMBERED

QUESTION: I work for an elderly man who has six married sons and daughters, many grandchildren, and various other relatives. He is fond of them all and, although his income is not very large, he is extremely generous and thoughtful about presents for them.

As a consequence, I have to keep a record of their birthdays, wedding anniversaries, graduations, and other dates that mean something special, particularly among the chil-

dren. I keep notations in a diary that I have used from year to year, but even though the diary is fairly large, with an entire sheet for each day, some of the pages are almost illegible. I have added nicknames, their college addresses, and such notations as "favorite color, blue," "at the Lake in summer," and so on.

I have thought of establishing a card file, but am afraid that in handling the cards I might mislay them and then they would be misfiled under wrong dates. What do you suggest? Also, when a person is remembered several times a year, how should I file the card?

ANSWER: You are right about the possibility of misfiling cards. For the sort of reference list you need it would be best to combine a card file with a diary.

In your spare time you might start making out a new diary. It need not be so large as the one you have at present, for all you will need to enter will be the names. For each name make out a small file card, giving the name again; a nickname, if one is used; home address; other addresses, such as those at business, at college, and for the summer; facts like "favorite color, blue" that have proved helpful when it was time to choose a present; and the year of birth (when we are not with a youngster all the time, it's hard to believe that he may have outgrown the sort of toys that we have been accustomed to send him). File the cards in alphabetical order, using a set of colored A to Z index tabs to divide them for quick reference.

#### MANAGEMENT OF AN EMPLOYER'S HOUSEHOLD

QUESTION: In my new job I am supposed to take care of my employer's household expenses. I can make out his cook's checks properly and on the correct dates, because I simply follow the records kept by the previous secretary, but I don't

know how to arrange for the check to be delivered. Besides, suppose that my employer should be out of town when it is time to have a check signed?

When I mentioned this matter to my roommate, we became curious about what to do in taking care of household salaries for a man who has a staff of servants.

ANSWER: The most considerate thing a secretary can do for her employer's domestic help is to see that they are paid on time. If they are to be paid on the fifteenth and the thirtieth of the month, for instance, the checks could be typed as early as the twelfth and the twenty-seventh, but dated ahead. This allows time for obtaining the signature of a man who is busy with conferences and outside appointments.

When you give him a check to sign, have with you an envelope with a window seal in front. (The name on the check will show through, but not the amount.) As soon as the check has been signed, slip it inside the envelope, seal it, and give it to him, so that he can carry it home and present it in a fresh condition. If your employer has a large household, you may have an arrangement with his wife or his housekeeper whereby you will telephone to her as soon as the checks are signed, and she will send the chauffeur after them.

When checks are to be delivered in this way, they are slipped into separate window envelopes, left unsealed; then all are placed in a heavy envelope and sealed with tape. This outer envelope is addressed to the wife or the housekeeper. When the chauffeur delivers this envelope to his employer's wife or housekeeper, she opens it and looks at the individual checks, for final verification, and then seals the window envelopes before distributing them.

If your employer is going to be out of town when it is time to sign a salary check, make it out so that he can sign it before he goes, but put on it the date when it would ordinarily be

paid. He will probably take the check or checks home for his wife or his housekeeper to hold; but if he asks you to hold them in the safe, instead, make a notation on your calendar pad so that there will be no likelihood of your forgetting them. If he lives alone with one servant, he will very likely take the check with him and give it out before he leaves on his trip.

QUESTION: I am secretary to a businesswoman who lives with her elderly mother. They have decided to have their home redecorated and some of the furniture replaced, and my employer has asked me to get estimates from several firms before she makes a decision.

At first I thought of writing to various decorators, describing the house and asking for estimates. Now, however, I am beginning to wonder whether I should call them up on the telephone, instead, so that we can discuss the matter, or even whether I should call personally at their offices.

ANSWER: Since you are located in a large city, you would telephone several firms, tell them that you are secretary to Miss Smith, who is planning to redecorate her home of so many rooms, and ask when someone can go with you to look over the house. If you were in a small locality, where there were no decorators, you would write a letter along the above lines to firms in the nearest large city or in a city of your employer's choice.

Before calling or writing, find out from your employer what days and what times during the day would be the most convenient for these visits. After the decorator has suggested a certain appointment, check with her again, to be sure that it will be perfectly satisfactory. You will then call or write to the decorator a second time, to confirm the appointment. Nine o'clock in the morning may sound fine to a young busi-

ness girl, but to the elderly mother at home another time of day might be more convenient.

When the decorator looks the house over, he will make suggestions and he will also ask you whether your employer has any preferences. He can judge the ladies' tastes fairly well from what he sees; but since they are desirous of a change, he will naturally suggest new colors and ideas. He will not be able to quote accurate prices until he and the client have agreed on exactly what is to be done, but you should ask for estimates.

If a decorator is reluctant to commit himself until he has talked with your employer, you can usually secure some information by asking for the approximate cost of several specific items, such as a drapery material that has been suggested, or the washing and painting of a certain number of walls, or the cost of reupholstering a chair. Allowing for the fact that these prices will be attractive, in an effort to get the entire job, they will help give some indication of the general price range in which a decorator works. Since your employer has asked you to handle the initial contacts, she will expect some sort of report from you to help her decide with which firm she would choose to carry on business.

### SHOPPING

**QUESTION:** Am I supposed to do errands for my employer's wife?

**ANSWER:** Some secretarial jobs call for a great amount of shopping and attention for an employer's family—opening and closing several homes, supervising decorations, making travel arrangements, and so on. Most secretaries, however, are not hired with the understanding that shopping is to be part of their duties.

An employer's wife may occasionally ask a secretary to do

a special favor or to go on an errand near the office. In such cases, the secretary is not expected to snatch a sandwich and then try to cover the stores in her usual lunch hour. She gives herself the time that she regularly needs for her meal and then continues on her way to take care of the errand. It would be a little difficult, as well as ungracious, for a girl to try to avoid the task by saying that she has a dentist's appointment at 12:30. If she has an appointment or has errands of her own to do in her lunch hour, she takes care of these; then the other errands are done before her return to work in the afternoon.

Often there is not much distinction between doing an errand for the boss and doing it for his wife. When he asks his secretary to pick up theater tickets, that is part of the job; so if it happens to be his wife who asks her to do it, there is no real difference. Most of the errands are of that sort—for the family's convenience—and the only thing that throws a different slant on the matter is who does the asking. However, wives seem to have a monopoly on unpleasant jobs, such as exchanging and returning their hasty purchases, and these are unfair.

#### WHEN GETTING MARRIED

The following questions came from three different girls:

QUESTION: I wish to continue working for a few years after I am married. Am I supposed to ask my employer for permission to do so, or will he take it for granted, if I don't speak of leaving, that I intend to stay. I would rather not bring up the subject if I can avoid it, for I understand from outside information that my employer does not approve of married women's working.

ANSWER: Even if an employer heartily endorses married women's working, his secretary is expected, as a matter of



courtesy, to ask him if it will be agreeable to him for her to continue in her job.

When an employer is known to have opposite views, it would be shortsighted, indeed, for a girl not to discuss the matter with him. She would surely not wish to be handed a dismissal notice for a wedding present. In bringing up the subject, you might say, "I should like very much to be able to continue in my job for a while after I'm married. Would you find it agreeable for me to stay on for a year or two?"

Your employer may explain to you that it is a policy of the firm to have jobs filled by single girls wherever possible and that you might be replaced if someone satisfactory should be found. Or he may say that while he personally wants a single girl, there is no reason why you can't work elsewhere in the firm and that he will arrange for a transfer if you wish. You may even be pleasantly surprised and find that your employer is not only willing to have you remain, but that he is a bit relieved at knowing that he need not have the trouble of hiring and training a new secretary.

Whatever the answer, you will know where you stand, while your employer will have had the chance to exercise his right of filling the position as he pleases. A little talk like this is always the best thing for both parties, for then there can be no future misunderstanding.

QUESTION: Should I ask my employer to my wedding?

ANSWER: If the wedding is to be a small one limited to the families and a few close friends, you would not invite your employer and his wife unless they were good friends outside of business. In case of a large wedding, you might wish to invite him and his wife. The invitation would be addressed to them at their home, even though you had never met the wife personally.

**QUESTION:** After I am married, should I continue to use my maiden name in business or should I adopt my married name?

**ANSWER:** Almost always a girl is still "Miss Jones" in the office where she continues working. It is considered unnecessary for her employer and other close associates to try to remember to call her by her new name.

As secretary you probably have occasion to sign legal papers as a witness or with the power of attorney. In such cases, you would sign your name as Mary Jones Smith. You would not forget to notify the person or the department in charge of salary records that your name has been changed legally; not only will they need to change their office records, but you are required by law to notify them of changes for withholding-tax purposes.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Give at least a dozen duties that comprise a secretary's job and tell how etiquette enters into them.
2. If you were secretary or assistant to an executive, how would you keep interruptions to your superior to a minimum?
3. If you should fail to understand something that your employer says during dictation, what should you do?
4. If your employer's instructions regarding certain pieces of dictated material are not always complete, what should you do?
5. If your employer pauses during dictation and seems to be groping for a word or trying to recall facts, should you speak up and try to help him?
6. If you should be working for more than one employer at the same time, and each one should happen to want a piece of work finished quickly, how would you show your cooperation?
7. If you were working for more than one employer, what would you do if one of them should tell you to do a task one

way and the other employer should tell you later to do the same work another way?

8. Why is it important to maintain a systematic mailing list for Christmas cards, presents, and charitable donations?

9. What is the most considerate thing that you, as a secretary, could do in connection with paying your employer's domestic help?

10. If you were asked to shop for your employer's wife, how would you be expected to handle these errands?

11. When a woman secretary plans to be married, what questions of etiquette present themselves in connection with her work? How should she handle them?

12. Talk with some friend employed as a secretary and see what problems she may have that were not mentioned in this chapter. Bring these problems to class for discussion.



## **14. WHEN YOU DO THE HIRING**

Now the situation is reversed. Instead of looking for a job and for ways of getting ahead, you are looking for people to fill the jobs that you have to offer. Instead of trying to impress someone with your own qualifications, you are forming impressions of those who come to see you.

You may be the boss, who will have to make the final decisions on hiring people. You may be the secretary to a busy executive who leaves it to you to conduct preliminary interviews, give tests, and check references. Perhaps as supervisor

of a department or a branch office, you are responsible for the many details of hiring that usually exist in the large firm. Whatever your position, you will at some time or other be faced with situations that are unavoidable in employment work.

#### THE SCOPE OF YOUR WORK

When you do the hiring, you are in a fortunate position—and this is not because you can sit behind a big desk and bestow jobs with a wave of your scepter. You are fortunate because you are in a position to make job hunting pleasant for someone else. You can greet him with a friendly smile that makes him forget the frosty interviewer in the firm down the street. You can help make it easy for him to fill out an application blank, by providing him with a pen point that writes and with ink that isn't dried up like a ball of putty. If he's nervous when he comes into your office, you can chat for a moment about the weather or the baseball scores until he catches his breath.

There are many people who would like to do these things, but unless they have the authority of the interviewer, their good intentions are of no avail. They have to sit at their desks in the corner and keep silent, while someone who should never have been chosen for the job of hiring others issues ill will for the firm in a steady stream. He does it by keeping applicants sitting in front of him, waiting, while he carries on chummy conversations with office friends. He has an amazing accumulation of prejudices that serve him as a measuring stick, so he asks questions that are personal but not at all pertinent. He discusses everyone's shortcomings in a booming voice, and when he finally dismisses his victims it is with words of complete discouragement.

The personnel manager of a certain firm has stated that the scope of his work is threefold. Since his firm is well

known as a pleasant place in which to work, his statement is frequently quoted by other business executives. His three aims are these:

1. To obtain from the applicant as much information as is needed, but no more.

2. To give information about the firm and about the job.

3. And above all, to make a friend, whether you hire him or not.

#### IF TESTS ARE GIVEN

Unless a person has had to take tests himself, he may not realize how many things can disconcert an applicant. The noise around the office, to which everyone there is accustomed, is not only strange to a newcomer, but it becomes magnified when he tries to concentrate. The broken-down old typewriter in the corner that produces such poor work becomes an instrument of torture, designed to harass with every stroke the unfortunate girl who has to do a speed test on it.

An interviewer of any worth to his firm is supposed to show the same consideration toward others that he would wish to have shown to him if he had to take a test to get a job.

**The seating arrangement.** For taking a test of any kind, a person should be seated where people won't have to squeeze behind his chair to get by, where employees are not constantly pulling open file drawers around his head, and where another employee doesn't have to come over every minute and look for something in the desk used temporarily by the applicant. Applicants who take mechanical aptitude tests should be seated where curious employees won't be tempted to leave their work and come over to watch.

If a girl is to be given two tests, one in shorthand and one in typing, the best arrangement is for her to be given both

tests in the same room. The less moving around she is subjected to, the better she can concentrate.

**Making preparations.** Regardless of how busy the interviewer is, he should allow the applicant a warming-up period if the test calls for it, and he should assure the applicant that this period is for practice only, not for scoring.

When it comes to doing the actual test, it is unfair to an applicant to have him start and then stop through lack of proper preparation on the part of the interviewer. All material—paper and copy work for a typing test; pencils and questionnaire for a clerical test; blocks, tweezers, pegs, or whatever may be required for each type of manual-dexterity test; and anything else needed for various tests—should be completely assembled before the timing is to begin.

#### CHECKING REFERENCES

**Personal friends of the applicant.** There is some question among employers as to the value of references from an applicant's personal friends. In more than one large firm the practice has been discontinued, on the ground that friends will almost always find good things to say about a person to help him get a job, and that whatever revealing truths are received are too infrequent to be worth all the time and postage consumed.

However, if you are in a firm where the practice is still followed, it should be kept in mind that to ask someone for a reference is to ask him for a favor. The person may be a busy housewife or an elderly man or woman retired from business, and for anyone in these circumstances to sit down and compose a letter of reference is not an easy thing to do.

It has been found that a firm gets the most satisfactory results by (1) writing a brief but courteous request, and (2) enclosing with it a printed form that can be filled out.

*Suggested letter of inquiry*

Dear Mr. White:

In making application for a position with this firm, William Jones has given your name as reference.

As it will be of help to us to get an opinion of Mr. Jones's character from one who knows him personally, we would appreciate it very much if you would care to write your comments on the enclosed form. Please be assured that any information you give us will be held in strictest confidence, and at no time will it be divulged to the applicant.

We thank you sincerely for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

*Printed form for reply.* The illustration on page 291 shows a suggested printed form for reply, to be enclosed with the letter of inquiry. This form can be folded over and sealed like an envelope, with a return-postage guarantee printed on the front, above the address of the firm. Then the sealed form may be dropped into the mail-box without a stamp.

Questions vary, but generally in checking personal references they run somewhat along these lines: Do you feel that he is dependable? Is he capable of sustained enthusiasm? Does he generally show a cooperative attitude? Would you hire him?

**Previous employers.** The same letter that was written to a personal reference may be used for writing to an applicant's previous employer, if the words, "character from one who knows him personally," are replaced by the following: "character and ability from one who has previously employed him."

In writing to an applicant's previous employer, the same



type of printed form as that used for a personal reference may be enclosed for a reply, except that instead of such gen-

To: The National Company		<u>William Jones</u>	
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
QUESTIONS			
IN			
Fold			
THIS			
SPACE			
Signed .....			
Gummed edge			

Gummed edge

Gummed edge

eral questions as Do you feel that he is dependable? the queries should be more specific: Is he punctual? and Has he the ability to work without supervision?

You also want to learn what you can about his attitude and performance on the job, and to check on the information

that he gave you concerning the length of time he worked, his salary, and the title of his job. Such questions are generally worded as follows: How long did this applicant work for you: From ——— to ——— What was his (her) salary at the time of leaving? What were his (her) duties? Did the applicant average fewer ——— or more ——— than ten absences a year? Would you—or would you not—rehire this applicant?

In appraising replies from this source, you should attempt to judge with fairness any discrepancies between the facts stated by an applicant and those furnished by a previous employer. Many cases have been known where employment records were inaccurately kept or erroneously copied by someone who filled out the reply form. Then, too, not everyone looking for a job can remember exactly the length of time that he worked at previous jobs, and his mistake in giving this item may be entirely free of dishonesty.

When a discrepancy is a small matter, perhaps a difference of a few days or weeks in the period of employment, it is not generally considered important. When there is an appreciable difference between the statements made by an applicant and those made by previous employers, the fact may be mentioned in a pleasant way to the applicant and probably cleared up before he is definitely hired.

**Scholastic records.** When an applicant has worked before applying to your firm for a job, you will no doubt be more interested in what his latest employer has to say about him than in what his teachers may say. But when the applicant is a student or a recent graduate, you may wish to find out what you can from those who have had the opportunity to observe him at school or college.

You may wonder if it will be an imposition to write to more than one reference at the same school. As a rule, one

is enough, especially if the school is small and the records are likely to be coordinated in one office. However, if the applicant gives you more than one reference in the same school, you should feel free to inquire of each one; for it is safe to assume that he has been encouraged by those whose names he gives as references, to offer their names. In high school they may be the principal, the boys' or the girls' vocational adviser, and the head of a department. In college they may be the dean of men or the dean of women and the head of a department.

When writing to more than one person at the same address, the same letter and reply form may be used in each case.

A suggested letter is as follows:

Dear ———: <sup>1</sup>

Frederick T. Lane, of 12 Main Street, this city, has applied to us for a job in our printing department.

As it will be of help to us to know of Mr. Lane's ability and characteristics as evidenced in school, we would appreciate it very much if you would care to write your comments on the enclosed form. Please be assured that any information you give us will be held in strictest confidence, and at no time will it be divulged to the applicant.

We thank you sincerely for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

The gummed-envelope arrangement already shown in this chapter can be followed. No specific questions for insertion will be suggested here, however, for the information sought would be likely to vary in different lines of business.

<sup>1</sup> Forms for addresses and salutations when writing to school officials will be found on pages 213-215 in Chap. 10.

You may want to know an applicant's rank in scholarship. For example, a student might be thirtieth in a class of 350, and that would tell you that he ranked in the top 10 per cent of his group.

If you requested it, you could learn what his marks were in certain subjects or groups of subjects, such as office practice, typing, machine-shop practice, or domestic science.

Questions regarding his personality and his citizenship and leadership characteristics will be answered if the reply can be made in an objective manner. In fairness to the student it is felt by school personnel that mere recollection or chance judgment is not enough.

As for checking references by telephone instead of through the mail, this is often an excellent way to check with previous employers. If the job opening is one that has to be filled at once, the telephone serves as a quick medium of checking on an applicant before hiring him. Besides, a conversation will frequently reveal more about an applicant than a checked reply would.

For the other two types of references, however—personal friends and scholastic records—you cannot always be certain of finding the person to whom you wish to speak within easy reach of the telephone, and the mail is consequently considered the better choice.

#### IF THERE ARE NO OPENINGS

Unless an applicant is totally unsuited for a job with your firm, someone should write down his name, his address, what work he has been doing for the past 3 years, what his salary has been, and what kind of work he is interested in. On the basis of this preliminary interview, it should then be decided by someone in authority whether the applicant might fit into the organization, so that it would be well to have him fill out

a complete application, or whether it would be an imposition on him to take up his time further.

Besides providing for the possibility of needing these applications later, the firm will be sure of doing an applicant a kindness in making him feel that his qualifications have been treated as if they had some worth. The encouragement that has been shown in this way by a secretary or a personnel-department clerk toward someone looking for work has often been a strong morale booster. Care should be taken, however, to say nothing about a job later, for false promises do more harm than good. All that is needed is a simple explanation: "There is no opening now that would interest you, and I have no idea when there might be one. If you care to register with us, though, I'll see that your name is kept in our reference file."

When a promising candidate is about to leave, it does no harm to add, "If you don't find exactly what you're looking for, why don't you get in touch with us again? Something might come up that we don't know of now," or "If you're coming this way after the summer season (or after the first of the year, etc.), drop in and see whether anything might be developing. I'll be right here."

#### IF AN APPLICANT IS NOT QUALIFIED

When an applicant is obviously unfitted for work in a certain firm, it is inexcusable to brush him off with a flat "There is nothing" or "No one is needed." Even a smile accompanying such an answer doesn't take out the sting. In firms where good will is valued, the employees who meet the public are instructed to say, "I'm very sorry, but there doesn't seem to be a thing," or "I'm sorry, but we don't plan to take on additional help."

**Should he be told at the interview of reasons for his rejection?**

Opinion seems to be divided on this point. Some employers feel that it is not their responsibility to try to improve a person or to tell him why he has failed to get a job, so they simply tell him that they will "let him know" when they have decided. Other employers feel that if they can help an applicant in his future contacts, they should do so and spare him any more discouragement than is necessary.

A third group has blended the experiences of the first two groups and, as a result, these employers have found a satisfactory method of dealing with the question. To summarize, they tread cautiously and don't offer their advice freely, but when they are sure that their suggestions will be helpful they speak up.

The following examples will explain various situations which these employers have encountered and which you may be interested in learning how to treat.

*As the applicant is about to leave, he asks whether you know the names of other firms where he might apply or whether you can suggest other types of work that he might try for.* If you feel qualified to give him suggestions, it would be kind on your part to answer him as fully as you can.

If, on the other hand, there is little concrete advice that you can give him, you will perhaps find that you are being very helpful by looking in the telephone book for names of firms or by telling him exactly how to reach the library and to look for names in the directory. Some people need quite elementary instruction in looking for a job.

*The applicant does not ask for information, but you feel that you could help him.* If the applicant is a stranger to the city, or a student just starting out to get a job, or perhaps a widow or an older woman who for the first time is finding it necessary to look for work, it is safe to assume that he or

she doesn't know much about local firms or current opportunities. Your suggestions, coming from one experienced in business, may furnish the very leads that are needed. In any cases that have come to my attention, the help offered under these circumstances has been gratefully received and acted upon.

With other types of applicants whom you feel you could help, you might find it better to probe first with a question: "Have you tried any of the other firms in this line?" or "Do you want to stay in the same line of work you have been accustomed to, or would you be interested in something else?"

If the answer comes from pursed lips or is evasive, or if in any way it shows reluctance on the part of the applicant to discuss matters with you, you will probably decide not to carry out your good intentions.

The applicant's appearance is against him. If his appearance is the only thing against him and it seems to indicate *lack of money*, you might wish to give him a job on a temporary basis. Many employers have been pleasantly surprised by the rapid improvement in the appearance of a person who looked none too prosperous at the interview, as soon as a few weeks' pay has given him a chance to buy some of the things that he needed.

In jobs where a woman's appearance is of primary importance—as working in a smart dress shop, lecturing before others, acting as receptionist or secretary in a firm where well-dressed and fashion-conscious people make up the bulk of the clientele—you might have a job open in the general office or elsewhere behind the scenes that would serve to introduce the girl into the firm.

In such a case, you should be careful at the time of hiring not to place yourself under obligation by promising a pro-

motion, but you can safely give the girl every break by telling her of discounts on clothes, counseling service, and so on, that are available to employees. If this applicant is immaculate and if her colors are not too jumbled, she may quickly develop into the smartly dressed woman you need for advancement in the firm.

If an applicant's appearance at an interview is poor because of *negligence*, this is something that will not likely be corrected after he has been given a job. Although advisers in schools and employment agencies may point out to him before he starts that he should be clean, you, an employer, will probably be rewarded with a resentful look or even a fresh answer, if you try to help an applicant by telling him the truths that he needs.

*An applicant fails to get a job because his experience or his education is inadequate.* Suppose that a newspaper advertisement or a request to an employment agency specifies certain definite qualifications—"college graduate" or "at least 5 years' experience in such-and-such a field." An applicant should be told that those particular qualifications are absolutely necessary for filling the job. In cases where a preliminary interview is given, his inability to fill all the requirements can be explained to him without the waste of his and your time in a detailed interview.

In another case, an applicant may not know of certain limitations regarding the job that he is seeking, and only during an interview will you realize that he is unqualified.

Employers have found it best not to have any discussion on the matter. For one reason, an applicant may feel—and perhaps say, to your embarrassment—"I wish something had been said in the ad (or to the agency). I wouldn't have come all the way into the city if I had known of these requirements."



Another reason is that an aggressive applicant may make it difficult for you to terminate the interview, arguing with you that he is qualified, despite lack of certain requirements. He may even be right; but if your firm has made it mandatory for you to find someone who definitely fills these qualifications, you may wish that you hadn't brought up the subject.

**Should the applicant be notified after an interview if he loses out to someone who is better qualified?** There is no point in telephoning to a person to give him unwelcome news. To confuse matters more, the one whom you wish to call might not be at home, and the message you would leave might be misunderstood. The applicant's hopes would then be raised until he had learned, on returning your call, that he had lost out. He might even come in, expecting to start to work.

However, it would be thoughtless to leave an applicant wondering day after day whether he still had any chance of getting a certain job. When you are unable to make up your mind at the time of an interview whether or not to hire an applicant, you will show consideration if, in ending the conversation, you tell him how long he may expect to wait for a decision. You may say that you will get in touch with him by a certain date if you have decided to hire him, or you may ask him to telephone to you on a certain day, to learn your answer.

This closing may be worded in various ways; for example,

"I have several more applicants to see today and tomorrow, but if you'll call me Friday I think I can give you an answer."

"As I mentioned, I'm doing the interviewing for our district manager. When he comes here on his next visit he will go over the application forms and decide which men he wants to see. You'll hear from us within a week if your name is among those selected."

"If you're chosen for the job you'll hear from us early next week."

"If you don't hear from us by Friday, you'll know that someone else has been selected for the job."

#### WHEN AN APPLICANT IS HIRED

In many firms, the person who interviews the applicant is not the same one who will act as his supervisor on the job. The interviewer will remain in the personnel department or in his private office, while someone else will take over the duties of supervising and teaching the newcomer.

The firm will decide whether the newcomer is to be introduced to his supervisor during the interview or whether he is to meet him after final hiring arrangements have been made. In any case, he should be made acquainted early, so that he may have the feeling of belonging.

Let us suppose that Miss White has just been hired as switchboard operator in a small concern. The interviewer calls in his secretary, Miss Allen, and introduces the two girls: "Miss Allen, this is Miss White." They both acknowledge the introduction.

INTERVIEWER: Miss White will take over the operation of the switchboard starting Monday morning.

MISS ALLEN (smiling cordially): I hope you'll like it here very much, Miss White.

MISS WHITE: Thank you, I'm quite sure I will.

INTERVIEWER: Miss Allen knows all about the work; so if you will see her when you come in, she can help you in every way.

In the hiring of large groups of employees, perhaps for temporary or rush work, time does not always permit the courtesy of an introduction. However, each applicant may

have the way paved for him to some extent by such suggestions as these:

"When you come in tomorrow morning, ask the receptionist to direct you to Miss Williams. She's in charge of the department where you will work."

"I'll give you this slip and you won't have to bother coming back to see me when you report for work Monday. Just take this slip right up to Mr. Anderson. His office is on the second floor at the head of the stairs. He will be expecting you."

Only through thoughtlessness, not deliberately, will the one who does the hiring leave newcomers to fend for themselves in strange surroundings. He wants them to like their jobs and their new firm and to like him, too. By making a special effort to put himself in the other person's place, the interviewer is able to convey the hospitality that characterizes every well-bred host.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. What ways have been mentioned in which you can help make things pleasant for the person who comes to you for a job interview? Can you think of other ways?

2. What is the scope of an employment manager's work, as stated by one man who is successful in his field?

3. Name at least five ways in which you can show consideration toward an applicant taking a test.

4. What procedure would you adopt if you were required by your firm to secure references from the following sources?

- a. Personal friends of an applicant
- b. Places where an applicant has previously worked
- c. Schools which the applicant has attended

Explain fully.

5. If you have no job to offer an applicant, how can you treat him kindly without falsely encouraging him?

6. If an applicant whom you do not hire should ask whether you can give him suggestions for finding work, would you do so?

7. If an applicant whom you do not hire does not ask for information, but you feel that you can help him, what should you do?

8. To what extent should you try to help the applicant whose appearance is against him?

9. If you do not hire an applicant because his experience or his education is inadequate, should you tell him so?

10. Should you always feel under obligation to tell an applicant who is not given a job the reasons for your decision?

11. When you are unable to make up your mind at the time of an interview whether or not to hire an applicant, how can you end the conversation in a way that will be satisfactory to you both?

12. When you have hired an applicant, what is the first thing that you are expected to do to put him at ease?

13. As directed by your instructor, set up an office in the classroom, and assume the following situations:

a. In a radio station there is an opening for a receptionist to take the place of the present receptionist, who is leaving to be married. The applicant is first interviewed at an employment agency, and then she is interviewed by the assistant manager of the station.

b. In a department store there are two openings: one for a salesman in the rug department and one for a girl to take charge of the mail-order department. The personnel manager has a secretary who sits outside his private office and does the preliminary interviewing of applicants before sending them in to the personnel manager for further questioning.

c. Another firm occupies an eight-story office building. There is a receptionist in the lobby, another reception-

ist in the personnel department, and several interviewers in the private offices. The openings are for girl clerks and secretaries, and for both men and girls to work as research analysts and assistant supervisors. In this firm it is the procedure for an interviewer to send a satisfactory applicant to the manager of the department where there is an opening; then this department manager conducts a brief interview before making the final decision.

- d.* Enlarge on the foregoing by making preparations for testing in some cases, and by having some applicants hired and some not hired.

14. At the direction of your instructor, secure an application blank from a business firm or an employment agency, and fill it out. This blank is not to be submitted for a job opening, but simply commented on in class for such qualities as neatness and completeness.



## 15. HOW TO TREAT THE NEW EMPLOYEE

When two persons have been working together for years, either one of them may be rather startled to hear the other say, "I remember the first day I came to work here. You said to me . . ." Irrespective of the length of time that a person works for a firm, his feeling during the entire period of his employment may be colored by the way he was treated in the beginning.

### MAKING HIM ACQUAINTED

**His surroundings and other employees.** As was explained in Chapter 14, the new employee is introduced to the person under whose direct charge he will be placed. This is done either at the time of the interview or as soon as the newcomer reports for work.

When a new girl is hired by the manager, he sees that she

meets his secretary or a woman supervisor or the chief telephone operator or the head of the filing department—whoever knows the details of the job that she has been engaged to fill. A young man employee is introduced to his immediate superior, who is perhaps the boss in charge of the stock room or the garage superintendent or the sales manager. In an office, a young man may work for a secretary or for a woman supervisor.

After greeting the new employee pleasantly when he reports for work, the secretary or the supervisor makes him acquainted with his new surroundings. He is first taken to the coatroom and given a hanger, or he is assigned a locker and provided with a key. The washroom is indicated, and information is given regarding the cafeteria and recreational rooms. Then he is taken to the office, the room, or the specific location—such as a desk or a counter—where he will work.

In a firm that has a nurse-counselor, the supervisors are usually required to send newly employed girls to her on Monday mornings. She takes them through the cafeteria, the library, and the lounges; explains the facilities of the clinic and the rest rooms; and generally ends her little introductory tour by urging the girls to see her whenever they feel that she can help them. After this brief meeting, the girls go back to their supervisors, who continue the process of helping them to become acquainted with the people with whom they will work.

Introductions at the place of work vary. When an employee is to work alone, but there are fewer than half a dozen people in the organization, he is introduced to them all. In a large firm, he is introduced to those with whom he will come in contact in the course of his work and, as a further sign of thoughtfulness, he is also introduced to one or two others about his own age.

When the newcomer will work in the midst of a closely knit group, introductions are made all round. In a large department, he meets one or two persons working near him, as well as the supervisor's assistant. This latter introduction is made so that he will know whom to see if he should have a problem at any time when the supervisor is not available.

Sometimes introductions cannot all be made at once; for when people are talking on the telephone or attending to outside visitors, they are not to be disturbed. As soon as possible, however, introductions should be made, so that the supervisor will not forget, leaving the new member of the group feeling like an unwanted relative.

Seldom are coworkers so indifferent as not to ask a new employee to have lunch with them. Usually someone working near by extends the invitation, but there is nothing to prevent anyone else from doing so. If several days should pass without someone's inviting the newcomer out, the supervisor might do so; but in a large organization it generally has been found better to give the new employee still further chance to make friends among the others. Regardless of how little the supervisor is concerned with the distinction, their relative positions and salaries cannot help entering into the matter. In a small group, the distinction is not so marked. The supervisor is usually as much a part of the crowd as everyone else, and not a minute is lost in welcoming the newcomer to join them all. The invitation to lunch never carries with it an obligation to pay for the newcomer's meal. These dates are Dutch treats.

**The firm's regulations.** If you have been delegated by the boss to supervise the newcomer's initiation into his job, you continue by acquainting him with the firm's regulations. Ask him if he knows the working hours, rules about taking out packages, requirements about uniforms and their launder-



ing. You might as well get the bad news over with and show him the time clock.

He should be told of his privileges, too. Perhaps there is a section of the parking lot where he can keep his car, free. Perhaps he can secure reduced rates in the company store or at shops in the vicinity, upon presentation of an identity card. The boss may not object to his going out for coffee, as long as someone is at hand to answer the telephone.

In trying to make it pleasant for a newcomer, you might hesitate about showing all the work that there is to be done, or you might not feel like telling him all the firm's rules regarding attendance and lateness, because it sounds dictatorial. Although your reluctance is well meant, such omissions will actually make it harder for the new person. When he is unaware of the rules, he may unknowingly violate them and get into trouble.

**Outside business contacts.** It is recognized by progressive firms that a newcomer should be given every chance to become acquainted with the outsiders with whom he will carry on business dealings. The advantages work both ways. The outsiders are glad to be recognized promptly when there is a change in the personnel, and the new employees themselves are made to feel more necessary to their organization.

A sales manager will have one of his experienced men take along the newcomer on certain business calls. This is not only part of his training in salesmanship; but if plans are in the making for advancing the older man, the way is paved for the newcomer to handle the account alone afterward.

When a girl has an inside job, like that of receptionist or secretary, she may not find it easy at first to ask people their business. She becomes even more disconcerted when she learns that some of those whom she attempted to question are old friends of the boss or are his valued customers. Who-

ever is training the newcomer will help by spending a little time with her, the first few days, introducing her to the regular callers when they come in.

**Sources of information and help.** While the experienced employee takes for granted the usual sources of information and help in business, boys and girls in their first jobs may not know that these are available. There is the classified telephone directory; the city directory with listings by name and by street; and the most useful reference of all in an office, the dictionary.

Trade magazines, directories, and bibliographies are issued for every line of business of any size; and when these publications are available in a firm, the new employee should be told about them. It is not unusual for someone to struggle along for months trying to find information of all sorts pertaining to his new work, when he could have found help at once if he had known about these publications. Whether or not the firm pays for the subscriptions, it is considered selfish of individuals to throw away publications or to let them gather dust when ambitious young people might be getting help from them.

Regardless of previous experience elsewhere, the employee in a new environment needs to be told about further sources of information. There may be textbooks and reference books available; an emergency supply closet to draw on between scheduled deliveries from the stock room; a list of telephone numbers most frequently called; a schedule of the times when the bus runs, if the job includes overtime work.

It may not always be easy for you to spare the time to help as much as you would like. In that case, you may be able to call on a substitute—someone who has been in the firm long enough to act as guide, and whose likeable manner will help put the newcomer at ease. To acquaint a new employee with

his surroundings is one of the most thoughtful things you can do. If your own introduction was not half so pleasant, you know all the more vividly the importance of making anyone in a strange place feel welcome.

#### PREPARATION FOR THE NEW EMPLOYEE

When the employee is ready to start on his work, it is desirable to have everything available. To keep apologizing and excusing yourself to get things will prove embarrassing. By checking, ahead of time, the supplies that he will use, you will know whether a sales book needs new carbon paper or whether a stamp pad needs inking.

When a person is first seated at a desk, he can hardly feel pleased at being handed a dustcloth and told to put things to rights. If the one who previously held the job was not considerate enough to leave the desk in neat condition, another employee is expected to clean it and stock it with supplies before the new employee comes in.

A job is made unnecessarily hard if working equipment is not in good condition. A new girl may be timid about asking to have some minor repair made on her typewriter, or to have the broken glass shield in her desk light replaced. A prompt and inexpensive repair job would make her days much more pleasant.

**When he is to be your replacement.** When you leave a job, you are expected to be generous about helping your successor. If he is placed in your position before you go, you have an excellent chance to work with him and explain the details of the job. Under no circumstances does this include retailing bits of gossip, for a newcomer is entitled to start a job free from the slightest prejudice.

When no one is to take your place until after you have left,

you can still show your willingness to help in various ways, such as the following:

1. If you used an address-telephone index book, look it over carefully to see that it is up to date. You may have memorized a certain amount of information and not have needed to look things up often, but the newcomer will depend on the book as being accurate.

2. If the job entails a knowledge of details, leave notes of some sort for your successor to follow. Bookkeepers, secretaries, office managers, buyers, foremen, and others who leave positions of responsibility that involve details help the newcomer by giving him the benefit of the knowledge that they have accumulated on the job.

You probably have heard of "a guidebook" and of "job write-ups." The terms are similar and apply to a typewritten description of the duties that make up a particular job. The manager of a group might write up the various jobs in his department and keep them bound in one cover as a guidebook, or he might require each person to maintain his own record. In the latter case, the manager looks the material over when someone new is to be brought in, to make sure that no changes have been overlooked. Besides serving as an aid for training new employees, this prepared material is used for instructing others in the department, in order to maintain an adequate understudy program.

In a small firm where the work is apportioned with less rigidity, usually several people can do the same job. Then the need for a written guide is frequently unnecessary. In the very small place, however, such as the one-girl office, the need comes up again. When only one person has done the work and takes his knowledge away with him, it is hard for a newcomer to try to carry on with only sketchy instructions from the boss.

3. Prepare a list of words, phrases, and abbreviations peculiar to the business in which you are engaged. In one radio station, for instance, a new secretary, bewildered by the terminology, found that in several months she had compiled more than 300 technical terms. Law, engineering, medicine, printing, insurance, transportation, advertising, and finance are only a few of the many other types of business that embrace a specialized vocabulary. When technical dictionaries are available, they are extremely helpful; but either as a supplement or as the only guide, a handmade list is of constant value to the one who inherits it.

4. Your courtesy is complete if you tell your successor to call on you at any time when he cannot find something, or when he may need your help to refresh his memory. Give him your telephone number if you will still be near, or your address if you are moving out of town. The employer whom you are leaving will also be pleased to learn of your accessibility.

When a job has been left in good condition and with adequate information on hand for the new occupant, it is seldom necessary to call on a former employee for assistance. However, the fact that the offer is made is evidence of a desire to make things thoroughly pleasant for everyone.

#### EXPLAINING THE WORK

You may be the supervisor of a group, or you may be a coworker who has been asked by the boss to give a helping hand. The instruction may be given in various ways: in a training class; in short, planned periods combined with the new employee's practice on the job; or through odd moments of help snatched from your more pressing duties.

In the position of instructor, however temporary, you have

the enviable opportunity of helping a person become adjusted. Because his happiness is largely dependent on his attitude toward his job, a new employee owes much to the one who guides him with a hand so deft that he truly loves his work.

**Putting the employee at ease.** By introducing the newcomer to others you give him a feeling of greater ease among them. He can speak to them afterward with confidence, expecting a friendly response.

By putting him at ease when you start to teach him, you give him the same friendly feeling toward his tasks. In the few seconds that you take to draw two chairs together, to make a joke, to tell about something amusing that happened on the way in to work that morning, a responsive feeling is kindled that makes for a good start.

**Finding out what he already knows about the job.** You will need to find out what he already knows, so that no time will be wasted in repetition. So general a question as "What do you know about the work?" will only bring forth a general answer, like "Why, quite a bit, I guess," or "Well, I'm not sure just how you do things here." Definite questions make it easier for the employee to give definite answers, and they have the further advantage of sounding less abrupt. As the case may require, you might ask, ["Have you had much opportunity to type figures?" "Was there much occasion for you to decorate windows in your previous job?" "Were you shown in school how to make out a check?"]

**Getting him interested in learning.** Three department managers known to have congenial groups under their supervision were asked for their formulas for getting the new employee interested in learning. Their replies reflect their personal natures, and that perhaps is the secret. Instead of fol-

lowing rules, they follow their inclinations. Here are their several ways of dealing with the problem.

Mr. A is easy going and doesn't care about discipline, as long as the work is done. His conversation with the new employee is somewhat as follows: "We don't like to rush around here, but some days the orders come so fast we can't help ourselves. I'm going to show you all the little tricks for getting the work done quickly. You won't use all the information at once, but keep it on tap until you need it."

Miss B feels sorry for the girls placed under her supervision. Their salaries are low and the work is monotonous, but there is little that she can do about it. However, she has found that by bringing out what slight attraction there is to the job, she makes the girls happier. She may say, "It won't take you long to learn how to make these. Then we'll go into the stock room and you can see all the colors you're going to work with. There's another room off there, and I'll show it to you at the same time. The girls bring their lunches and make coffee and have a lot of fun. There are some good magazines, too."

Miss B's predecessor was not hard to work for, but she had a steady stream of dissatisfied girls giving notice to leave. Perhaps her introduction to the job had something to do with it: "I'll show you how to make these, and then I'll take you into the stock room. It's kind of dusty in there, so your blouse will probably be a sight when we're through. Oh, that next room? It's a rest room, so called, but I don't see how anybody can rest with all that jabbering every noon. You're allowed to bring your lunch."

Miss C is responsible for a department where each step of the work must be done exactly right. A slight mistake may mean hours spent checking and rechecking until the error is found.

Although only people of the right temperament are hired in the first place, Miss C finds it helpful to do what she can to arouse enthusiasm among the newcomers by explaining, "The nice part

of this job is the fact that you'll be your own boss. No one will stand over you and tell you what to do. Like every job of responsibility, though, it means doing it right or doing it over. So don't try to rush things, but go slowly at first until you're accustomed to the work."

Like Miss B, Miss C had a predecessor whose conversation not only lacked encouragement, but was in poor taste under any circumstances. She was likely to say, "The work has to be done right or the treasurer will hit the ceiling. Of course, it means more to him. He makes ten thousand a year."

**Presenting the tasks.** Unless you adjust your pace to the new employee's hesitant steps, he will have a difficult time understanding his new tasks. Things have to be explained to him carefully, even a portion at a time when the job is composed of a number of unrelated operations. Regardless of the difficulties at the moment, it is considered poor leadership, as well as poor manners, for the one serving as guide to show impatience in the slightest degree.

As you go along, you will need to keep in mind that the terms you use and the references you make to certain departments and people may be quite mystifying to someone who lacks experience.

One girl tells with amusement how conscientiously she used to keep all her adding-machine tapes clipped together by days and in neat bundles in her desk.

Finally she asked the supervisor if there was room in the file for them, since they were taking so much space. The supervisor couldn't imagine why the girl wanted to file them, until she was reminded, "But you told me, the first day, that I could put these in the cylinder file."

Without realizing that she might be taken seriously, the supervisor had called the wastebasket the "cylinder file," an old office joke, about on a par with sending a new mechanic out for a left-handed monkey wrench.



In stressing the important points, polite emphasis can sometimes unintentionally begin to sound like scolding. One way to avoid this is to say, "I don't want to keep repeating the same things when you already know them, so would you mind telling me the job now? Then I can see if there are any points that I have neglected to bring out."

**Tactful follow-up.** After you have watched the employee do his new work and it seems to you that he understands it, you can leave him for a little while. If he is going to wait on customers, it might be well for you to keep within sight so that he will be able to call on you for assistance if he needs it. But when the work does not depend on personal contacts, experience has shown that it is better for an instructor to say, "I'll be back in about half an hour and see how you're getting along." To specify a half hour—or whatever time seems preferable—is a tactful way of reminding him to get something done within that time. By saying that you'll see how he is getting along, you reassure him of your interest and let him know that you will be ready to answer questions that might come to his mind.

#### EXERCISING FAIR TREATMENT

**Privileges.** Although an honest attempt is made in most cases to see that a new employee is accorded his rightful privileges, a mistake occasionally is made. Either he is not given all the consideration to which he is entitled, or he is given more than the older employees have been allowed. Either way is unfair to the newcomer, for when he gets more than his share it arouses the resentment of others, even though he himself may not realize that there has been any favoritism.

*Time off.* One of the greatest sources of discontent among a group is the privilege given to a newcomer to come in later or to leave earlier than usual. Although the others cannot

object to someone's being accommodated once in a while, it strikes them as unfair if a person newly hired is allowed to do it all the time. The resentment might become serious if one of the older employees had asked for the same privilege in the past and had been refused.

Whenever the management has relaxed the hours for one employee, it has been found advisable for those in charge of various groups to be told to pass the word along to those under their supervision that extra time may be taken by anyone who needs it. (Verbal notice is better than a bulletin, for the latter might invite practically everybody to invent an excuse for getting out early.) This is generally called "train time," for the accommodation of those who might be able to make better connections between home and work if they had a few extra minutes.

*Vacation choice.* When a new employee is working with others, he is ordinarily given the last choice for his vacation period, but if a group will talk over vacation plans together, fit them in with the wishes of the boss, and try to be cooperative with one another, usually everyone can be satisfied.

If the newcomer is not part of a group, he chooses a time that will suit the convenience of his boss, but he is not expected to depend on others. In arranging for his time off, however, the question of substitution might have to be taken into consideration: if the newcomer's place during his vacation is to be filled by someone who has been in the firm longer, the employee with longer service has the preference.

**Letting him know how he is getting along.** If an employee fits into his new job quickly, it would be selfish of anyone not to tell him so. At first this can be done every time a particular piece of work is completed; but as the employee becomes accustomed to his new duties, there will no longer

be any necessity for perpetual encouragement. Nevertheless, even after he has lost his "new" status and become one of the crowd, he will be glad to have his efforts noticed with praise now and then.

If the newcomer does not do very well, it may not be his fault. Perhaps the instruction was not thorough. Perhaps the working conditions are unsatisfactory, with poor light or excessive noise, making it impossible for anyone to turn out a good job. The work may be too advanced for him to grasp, or it may be so elementary that he can find no interest in it. Under these conditions, an employee would not only be blamed unfairly; but if he should try to justify himself, it would place the person who brought up the subject in a rather embarrassing position.

**Giving credit when it is due.** When the person in charge of a new employee's training is himself under the supervision of a superior, he can give unmistakable evidence of his good will by telling the higher authority of the newcomer's abilities. There may be shortcomings, too; but unless they are of a serious nature and unlikely to be overcome through experience on the job, there is no need to call attention to them.

While the praise that you give an employee to his face helps to make him happy, the praise that you give him behind his back helps him toward a raise in pay.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. A new employee's first impressions at work have been proved to be important. Why?
2. Why should the new employee be introduced at once to those with whom he will work?
3. In what other ways can you help make someone feel accustomed to his new surroundings? Explain fully, adding suggestions that may occur to you which were not mentioned in the book.

4. If you should leave a job, in how many ways can you show your generosity in helping your successor?

5. What five steps can you follow in explaining a task to someone so that he will take an interest in it?

6. How can you follow up tactfully the instructions that you give?

7. How should such privileges as time off and vacation choice be treated in complete fairness to old and new employees alike?

8. When an employee under your supervision does well at his new job, what notice would you take?

9. If an employee under your supervision is not doing well, what steps should you take?

10. In what way can you give an employee praise for his work that will benefit him the most?

11. Three cases have been given showing how new employees' interest in learning was influenced by the attitude of their supervisors. Do you know of any other cases, either through your own experience at work or through hearsay?

12. Talk with friends who are newly employed and find out from them ways in which their superiors have been helpful.

## **Part 4**

### **Business Customs**





## **16. TRAVELING ON BUSINESS**

Traveling on business is a necessary part of the experience of those employed as buyers in retail stores, salesmen and saleswomen with large territories to cover, demonstrators, lecturers, specialists in various branches of the government, and occasionally of some secretaries. Then there are thousands of executives in every type of business whose work requires them to travel: for some employers trips are made almost weekly, while for others the annual business convention is a novelty.

In this chapter the various problems connected with business trips will be discussed. In addition, there will be included situations that present themselves on pleasure trips, if these are also likely to be faced by men and women who are traveling in the course of their work.

## RESERVATIONS

If one of the secretaries or clerks in your firm is supposed to take care of your travel reservations, you will be expected to tell her of your plans as soon as they are definite. A month ahead of time is not too early, if you are sure that there will be no need of making changes later.

If you handle your own reservations, start making inquiries early when you intend to go on well-traveled routes and to stay at the most popular hotels. Through delay you will risk the probability of being told, "We're very sorry, but everything has been taken."

When ordering train or plane tickets over the telephone, repeat the date and the time clearly at the end of your conversation, so that no error will be made. Although a ticket seller's sense of hearing may be acute, there are times when he is likely to misunderstand a customer's hurried "third" for "first" and "nine o'clock" for "five o'clock." Before hanging up the receiver, you will also make sure of the total price, including taxes. This will prevent extra work for the cashier, who, in case of a mistake, would have to be asked for more money after the first amount had been withdrawn. Besides, a mistake would mean an extra trip for the messenger whom you send to pick up the tickets.

Whenever you make reservations for someone else and are not able to get the accommodations that he desires, tell him of the substitution offered by the ticket clerk before you make final arrangements. Because of some reason unknown to you, the substitute accommodations might not be satisfactory.

To make a hotel reservation, send a typewritten note on your business letterhead, somewhat as follows:



Gentlemen:

I wish to reserve a single room and bath for three days, starting March 15. My train is due to arrive at 10 P.M.

I prefer a room as high from the street as possible and costing not over \$7.

Will you please send me confirmation of this reservation.

Very truly yours,

Gentlemen:

Will you please reserve four medium-priced rooms, with twin beds, for eight men from our firm. They are to attend our training class, which is to be held in the Empire Room of your hotel. We have already made arrangements for the Empire Room with Mr. Jones of your staff.

The men will arrive on October 10 shortly after 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and they will stay until late afternoon of the 15th.

In sending me confirmation please quote the price of the rooms.

All bills are to be sent to my attention. For credit references you can check with the National Bank or with our branch office located in your city.

Very truly yours,

When a hotel's reservations are filled, the management should at least send a printed post card in reply, expressing regret but "assuring you of our earnest desire to serve you in the future." If you receive no reply, write to the hotel again or, if the time is growing short, send a telegram and ask for a reply, collect.

If you are located in a large city, you may wish to make reservations for staying in certain other cities by telephoning to a local hotel that is part of a chain. The hotel will make the necessary out-of-town contact for you and report back. For names of such hotels, take note of advertisements that appear in your local newspapers from time to time, or refer to the Hotel Red Book at your library.

When you have to cancel a reservation of any kind, try to do it at once. Railroads and air lines usually set a dead line after which no money will be refunded; a hotel will not be eager to provide accommodations in the future after having been left with an unclaimed room. Besides, it is an evidence of thoughtfulness toward others to release reservations early. The travel line will have the chance to sell your ticket, the hotel will have time to accept another reservation, and consequently someone who needs them will have the opportunity to buy that ticket and to use that room.

#### ON ARRIVAL AT A HOTEL

The hotel's confirming letter or telegram is important evidence to have with you when you arrive. The clerk will be saved the trouble of checking the reservation, and you will be spared needless waiting.

In signing a hotel register, a man enters his name as William Jones. A married woman or a widow signs as Mrs. William Jones. A divorcee signs as Mrs. Butler Jones. An unmarried woman signs as Miss Mary Jones. When a man is accompanied by his wife, he signs Mr. and Mrs. William Jones, and she does not sign at all. If a group travels together, perhaps to attend a conference or a training class, each person registers separately.

## THE EXPENSE ACCOUNT

Not only is it dishonest to cheat on an expense account, but anyone who does so makes his traveling unnecessarily disagreeable. He has a guilty conscience to carry along, extra arithmetic to bother with, and a poor time for himself, all merely in order to chisel some small change. When he goes into a one-arm lunch stand, for instance, but puts on his expense account the price of a better meal, he robs himself of the pleasure every traveler takes in a good dinner in attractive surroundings.

**Expenses that a firm assumes.** Customarily, the expenses that a firm assumes are as follows:

The cost of transportation: train and plane tickets; rental of an automobile when one is required; taxi, car, and bus fares

Accommodations: Pullman fares, hotel rooms

Meals, including meal tips

Other tips

Telephone calls and telegrams when made in connection with business

The expense of running a personal car when it is taken on a business trip. Many firms establish a rate of so many cents a mile, which is supposed to reimburse an employee for all expenses, such as gas, oil, repairs, depreciation, wear on tires, and so on. Considerable hard feeling on the part of an employee can be avoided when parking and toll costs are reimbursed separately.

Certain laundry and pressing charges. On a short trip, a person is expected to plan his wardrobe so that there will be no laundry or pressing charges. On trips lasting several days or longer, it is customary for a firm to pay for valet service

on an average of two suits pressed a week. Ordinarily laundry is also generally paid for by the firm.

Additional expenses that have to be paid in cash, such as rental of a typewriter, public stenographers' fees, or outside help in setting up a booth at a business show. (When cash payment is not required, a bill is made out by the stenographer or the decorating firm or whoever rendered the service, and it is given to the traveler. He sends it along at once to his boss or the auditor or whoever will see that it is passed on and paid.)

In the matter of extraordinary expenses—those which are still in the interests of the business—it is best to be guided by precedent in the firm or by the requirements of a particular position. For instance, it is recognized that when a top executive of a company invites several people to dinner—generally with the unspoken, but understood, motive of furthering his firm's interests—he can't do much on a limited meal budget of a few dollars a day.

Since a firm's books are open to detailed scrutiny by the government's tax division, an expense account has to be backed up with receipts. This is no reflection on an employee's honesty. There are some items for which receipts are not possible—taxi fares, meals away from the hotel where one is staying, and tips, for example—but when the bulk of an expense account is supported by ticket stubs and hotel bills, the rest is understood to be in order.

**Expenses that a firm does not assume.** In general, expenses not mentioned in the foregoing list are not of a business nature, so they are paid by the employee. Even when a traveler is put to expense that he would not have incurred if he had stayed at home, he is expected to pay the bill when it is not strictly related to business.

The person traveling on business for the first time may wish to know some of the items that auditors have refused to cash—for instance, those listed here:

Clothing that has to be bought for a trip

A woman's extra visits to the hairdresser

Sightseeing trips

Magazines, theater tickets, and movies, even when such expenses are incurred less for pleasure than to fill in time in the evening away from home.

### TIPPING

Although travelers agree that tipping is bothersome and expensive, they are expected to conform with the custom wherever it is in effect. When there is a rule against tipping, the traveler will simply say, "Thank you" for service when the occasion arises. Air lines forbid tipping, an increasing number of restaurants are printing a "No gratuities" request on their menus, and many department stores permit no tips in their beauty shops.

Since people traveling on business are nearly always provided first-class accommodations by their firms, the tips enumerated here apply to that kind of travel. They are included in an expense account when they cover service on items included in the list already given of expenses that a firm assumes. For other types of service, like visits to barber shops and hairdressers and being paged in a hotel lobby for a personal telephone call, the tip is paid but it comes out of personal funds.

**In a restaurant or a hotel dining room.** *Checkroom attendant.* For a man's hat and coat or for a lady's coat, the usual tip is 10 cents. In a very smart place, it is 25 cents.

*Ladies' maid.* It is usually only in the smartest places that there is a coat rack in the dressing room, with a maid in

attendance. For checking a coat and helping a woman on with it when she is leaving, a maid is given 25 cents.

*At the table.* In an ordinary restaurant, the waitress's work is cut to a minimum, with bare table tops that can be wiped and with outside service counters that can be reached easily for water and silver. Here the usual tip is 10 cents; from 10 to 15 per cent of the bill when it is over \$1. When people are traveling they usually have breakfast in the hotel's simplest room, such as a coffee shop or grill. The usual tip is 10 cents, even if breakfast is very light.

In a restaurant where tableclothes are furnished, the tables have to be changed and reset. The waitress's work is made harder in other ways, such as going on a long walk to the kitchen for everything and carrying heavy trays of covered dishes and side plates for more particular service. The average tip is based on the total of the bill, whether for one or two persons:

25 cents when the bill is less than \$2

35 cents up to \$3

40 cents when the bill is from \$3 to \$4

50 cents for a bill up to \$5

In a group, the tip would average a minimum of 20 cents a person. For large parties the tip is about 10 per cent, or more when the work is divided between two waiters and therefore speeded up. The head waiter is given a tip of about \$2, only when he has made a special effort to see that the service is of the best.

Not only do the serving details increase in the higher priced restaurants, but so do the tips. Every working person will appreciate the fact that the waiters in these places are almost entirely dependent on their tips for making a living.

The following amounts are considered the minimum for one person to give in a higher priced restaurant. More gen-

erous tips are given for special service or for a meal that is served in beautifully appointed surroundings.

35 cents when one's bill is less than \$2

45 cents for a bill around \$3

50 cents when the bill is nearer \$4

For two persons, 50 cents would be the total tip when each bill is less than \$2. On higher bills the tip would average at least 10 per cent. In a group, the tip would average 25 cents a person, with a minimum of 10 per cent.

**As guest in a hotel.** When you register, the room clerk hands your key to the bellboy, who takes you to your room. He unlocks the door, snaps on the light, steps aside, and you enter first. After setting your baggage down, he opens a window, switches on a lamp or two if it is night, and asks if there is anything you need. Since most hotel rooms are studded with lists of information, you will probably only have to answer, "No, thank you," and tip him. On his way out, he will ask you if you want the center light, which he had first turned on, and then he continues on his way.

For this service a bellboy is paid 25 cents when there is one piece of baggage, from 35 to 50 cents when the baggage is heavy or when there is more than one piece. The same amounts apply when you are leaving and you send for a bellboy to come for your baggage. A porter is generally given 50 cents for taking a trunk to a room on his small wheeled carrier.

During your stay in the hotel you may require further service. A tip of 15 cents is given to the valet for bringing clothes back pressed; this is in addition to the hotel's pressing charge, which is put on your bill. The customary tip to a boy who pages you in a hotel lobby is 25 cents. People are accustomed to giving 10 or 15 cents for having things delivered to their rooms at their own request, such as newspapers,

packages, and telegrams. If, however, a daily newspaper is left at your door without charge by the management, no tip need be given for this service. When a boy goes on an outside errand, he is given at least 25 cents, to make up for the time that he loses from other calls. Rich and prominent guests are expected to give more generous tips, for generally they receive extra attention that, in some measure, warrants this.

Many travelers choose to tip the chambermaid, for they know how hard she works; but they are not supposed to spend time looking for her. However, when an overnight guest is leaving in the morning, he can generally find out where the maid is when he sees her equipment in the corridor outside the room in which she is working. On a visit of several days or a week, a guest is likely to see the maid during the last day of his stay. He can take this opportunity to tip her without waiting for the very moment of his departure.

When a guest has a room with a private bath overnight, the average tip to the chambermaid in the average city hotel is 25 cents. For a longer stay, a tip would vary from \$1 a week, upward. Ordinarily a room does not require so much attention when the same person occupies it steadily as it does when someone new checks in each night.

Barbers, manicurists, and hairdressers are tipped the same as at home—10 per cent or more, depending on the care that they take.

**En route.** For a short taxi ride, 10 cents would be a reasonable tip if you had hailed the driver from a curb as he was passing by. If he had waited his turn in a line outside a hotel or a station before picking you up and then his meter registered a small fare for your ride, he would expect a larger tip. In a sense, you are not only helping to offset the time that the driver must spend in line again after so little profit, but



you are partly paying, too, for the convenience of having had a taxi draw right up to the entrance as you walked out.

For longer taxi rides, a tip would average 15 cents for a fare of about \$1, with an additional 10 per cent for a drive outside the city or for a long wait.

Train passengers are required to pay a station porter 15 cents for each article that he carries for them. This is a minimum amount, established by the railroads in order to ensure the porters a minimum wage on which they can depend. At this writing the rule is in effect in all railroad lines throughout the country. A porter is allowed to keep whatever he is given in addition to this minimum; when the baggage is heavy or the distance is long, it is considered thoughtless of a passenger not to pay more.

On a day trip in a parlor car, the porter takes your baggage from the station porter as you get on the train, holds it in the vestibule during your ride, and hands it down again when you leave. He will provide a paper bag for a woman to keep her hat in if she wishes, and he is ready to give a man's clothes a brushing as the train pulls in. It is customary to tip the porter 25 cents on leaving. On an overnight trip, a Pullman porter is given 50 cents when a passenger has occupied a berth, and a larger tip—generally \$1—from anyone occupying a private space, such as a roomette or a bedroom.

In the dining car, the waiter is tipped 25 cents for lunch or dinner for one person, a little more for two persons together. The customary tip for breakfast, depending on the serving details, is 15 to 25 cents. In the club car, the waiter is tipped 10 cents for serving one person and 15 cents for serving two who are together.

On air lines, as has already been noted, no tipping is allowed.

## HOW TO MAKE TRIPS PLEASANT INSTEAD OF IRRITATING

If you have to dissipate your energies in a bout with all sorts of unpleasant situations, you may feel justified in becoming nervous and cross. However, the people you have traveled to see have no concern about that. They naturally expect that a businessman or a businesswoman will arrive with his or her mind on work, not with attention scattered and disturbed by countless irritating experiences that probably could have been avoided.

There are ways in which you can make your trips pleasant and, at the same time, show a knowledge of the rules of etiquette as observed by all good travelers. Here are some suggestions:

Have a magazine or a book as a refuge. Others can't take offense at preoccupation when you appear to be reading.

Wearing dark glasses looks silly at night or when the day is rainy, but at other times it is a help to have them when you wish to lean back and think over things, undisturbed.

The best way to be sure of being on time for appointments and travel connections is to plan to be early. It may mean getting up earlier than usual, or waiting sometimes in a reception room when you have arrived at an office early for an appointment, but you will be free from worry over being late.

You might like to have a meal served in your room occasionally, to break the monotony of sitting alone in a restaurant. A woman, especially, sometimes finds this relaxing. After a hard day, if she is without plans for the evening, she can go up to her hotel room, discard her shoes for a pair of comfortable slippers, telephone Room Service, and order a good dinner; then lean back in an upholstered chair while she eats at leisure and reads the evening papers.

When the meal is brought in, the waiter presents the check to be signed or paid for. At the same time, he is given a tip ranging from 35 cents upward, depending on the size of the dinner and the elaborateness of the service. (The extra charge the hotel makes on the bill for room service does not pay for the tip.) When the meal is finished, the wheeled table is pushed out to the corridor and left near the door for the waiter to pick up.

When you are finishing your packing, telephone to the cashier and ask, "Will you please have my bill ready in about 10 minutes? This is —— in room ——" This prevents the necessity of waiting in the lobby while a bill is being prepared.

#### A MAN AND A WOMAN TRAVELING TOGETHER

Occasions for a man and a woman to travel together on business are not numerous, but they do occur. There is the meeting or the hearing in which so many details are involved that an executive is required to take along his capable secretary. Or the sales manager going to the business-appliance show needs the assistance of an adept operator for the machine that he is to demonstrate. Sometimes a man and a woman, both executives of the same firm, are required to visit a factory in another part of the country or to make a trip together to the home office for a conference. Sometimes a man from one firm and a woman from another firm will have occasion to make the same trip, and their reservations will coincide. They may be reporters off to cover the same story or buyers attending the same style show.

Despite the legitimacy of the necessary business trip, people have found that it is well to lessen the possibility of gossip in whatever way this can be done. One experienced secre-

tary has pointed out some such ways in the following description of her business trips:

My employer tries to leave on a trip with a clear desk behind him, so the day before he goes my book is well filled with dictation. This requires me to stay on the job another day, so he starts off and I leave alone on the following day.

I have found, through experience in attending various meetings at home, that a man seldom needs his secretary the first day, anyway. A first meeting gets off to a late start to allow everyone time to get there, the preliminaries take time, and generally the day ends with no need for secretarial assistance.

Since my employer has business connections in half a dozen large cities, he stops off for a few days at one of these cities on his way home. There is not enough work on these side trips to require my assistance, so I go directly home.

I usually need every minute of these extra few days before he returns, in order to arrange, type, and file the material that was accumulated on our trip; to answer some of the office mail that was not urgent enough for his assistant to forward; and to have the office in order so that when my employer arrives he will be able to take up his work without delay.

On my first trip to Washington, I chose another hotel than the one where my employer stays. I could do this because I had gone to Washington before on a vacation tour, so when my employer asked me to make reservations I made his as usual and told him I would stay at the —— Hotel because, "I liked it there on my first visit."

The first time I ever went to New York was when I made a business trip, and I went hurriedly in response to my employer's telephone call after he had been there several days. When I arrived, I found he had made a reservation for me in the same hotel where he was staying, but on a different floor.

Sometimes I had my meals alone, sometimes I ate with one of the girls in his lawyer's firm where the work was conducted, and once in a while I was invited to join the men for lunch.

There was never the slightest occasion for my employer to invite me out in the evening. He had many friends in New York, he was invited to dinner by wives of his business associates, and frequently he spent an evening on work.

The situation is more generally accepted that a man and a woman may travel together when they occupy equal positions than when they are in the position of employer and employee. They may have their meals together on the train, although there is no need for one to wait for the other. They give separate tips and they pay separate checks in the dining car. If the man offers to pay for the woman's check, she can refuse lightly by saying, "It simply goes on my expense account. Thank you just the same."

Men and women who are accustomed to traveling with business associates find that on a long trip they welcome some break in the companionship. When one of them decides to go to the smoker, the other one usually elects to stay behind or to go into the observation lounge or the club car. In general, when a man and a woman travel on business together, each one avoids placing the other in a position that might prove even slightly embarrassing.

### TRAVELING ALONE

A problem that seems particularly to bother most people when they are unaccustomed to traveling alone is whether or not to speak to strangers. Ordinarily they should not, but anyone old enough to go traveling on business should be able to judge when to make exceptions. The following illustrations of two exceptions are given as a guide for those unfamiliar with Pullman travel.

1. Two persons who are strangers to each other are occupying the same section of a Pullman. It is daytime and the

berths are made up into the customary double seats. The passenger with the ticket for the lower berth is accordingly in the seat facing forward, while the other passenger is seated opposite. It would give the appearance of rudeness, and not prudence, for the two passengers to ignore each other's presence. They smile pleasantly and say, "Good morning," and one might offer the other a magazine or a newspaper. They need not continue talking, although there is no reason why they shouldn't if they both wish to do so.

2. When people who are strangers to one another are placed at one table in the dining car, it is not necessary for them to speak to each other. However, if the group at a table should have some conversation together, a lady is always careful to pay for her own meal and tip.

The conversations that stem from these slight openings impose no obligation on the people involved to remain together for the rest of the trip. At the end of the meal in the dining car, the passengers may immediately go their separate ways, with no more ceremony than a pleasant nod and "Will you excuse me?"

There are at least two definite circumstances in which it has proved best not to talk to strangers. They are these:

Club cars and smokers are open to women, as well as to men; but a woman who strikes up an acquaintance with a man in one of these cars is considered not simply gracious and friendly, but a pickup.

It is foolish of anyone to hold a conversation with a stranger in a railroad station. If a stranger has a legitimate question to ask regarding travel, he can find uniformed employees who will be able to answer him. The gullible traveler who undertakes to be of help may find himself relieved of his wallet. His safest course when he is approached is to make

some such answer as "I don't know, but the trainman over there can probably help you."

#### SOCIAL LIFE AWAY FROM HOME

Some people, having gone on just one trip alone, have said, "Never again." While they enjoyed the opportunity to travel, they found the evenings too dreary without social contacts. The movies soon begin to pall on anyone who is not a real fan, and it is boring to read every night. What most people desire is the opportunity to mingle with others and feel that they have friends and acquaintances, if only temporary ones. Young people need these opportunities most of all.

While the suggestions that follow are not limited to a special type of traveler, they are made particularly for the benefit of the young man or woman who is visiting a city on business for the first time. These visitors are not likely to stay for more than a few days, so there is no time to meet people by joining clubs. There is enough time, however, for the travelers to enjoy themselves after work, at places where they will be made to feel welcome because they are keeping within the boundaries of good taste.

A close reading of the local newspaper will usually bring to light mention of a social affair that is being given by a club. It may be a bridge party or a square dance or some similar group activity. The club will be only too delighted to sell another ticket at the door, and at affairs like these there is no scarcity of committee members to see that tables of four are made up or that everyone comes into the lines for the opening Virginia reel.

The bulletin board in the lobby of the local Y.M.C.A. or Y.W.C.A. is another source of information. Not only are there listed the events that are to be held on the immediate

premises, but also those held outside under the sponsorship of young people's groups.

A member of a national organization, such as the Lodge of Masons, the Knights of Columbus, or a veterans' group, will often find that he can attend a dance or some other social affair being held by a local branch. It is usually best to call up the organization's office first, as he finds it listed in the telephone book, and ask if there is to be an affair within the period of time that he will be in the city. At the same time, he can make sure that it will be open to a member from out of town.

One of the advantages of belonging to a business club is the privilege of attending luncheon and dinner meetings held by the club's branches in different cities. The correct place, date, and time can be learned by telephoning to local headquarters. When a visitor arrives at the door, he shows his card of membership and buys a ticket. The committee member who is selling tickets will probably be interested in knowing that the club has a visitor and will call one of the officers to make introductions. Even without receiving this gesture of welcome, the visitor will soon have companionship when he is seated at the table for his meal.

Traveling is largely what a person makes it. Some find every trip an aggravation, yet others who cover the same ground may have a wonderful time throughout. One of the surest helps is a knowledge of the rules of etiquette. Those for traveling are strict, but they serve as a well-padded buffer to make a trip comfortable.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. When it is necessary to cancel a travel reservation, why is it important to do so at once?



2. If your job should require you to make travel reservations for others in your firm, what reference material could you keep on hand to enable you to give prompt service?

3. Draft a telegram to a hotel asking for a reservation.

4. How would you sign a hotel register?

5. What expenses on a business trip would you expect to assume personally?

6. From your own experience in traveling, do you know of ways to keep down travel costs on an expense account and still to travel comfortably?

7. Without going into details as to the amounts to give, name the occasions when you would be expected, according to current practice, to tip.

8. When a man and a woman travel on business together, what general rule of etiquette does each observe toward the other?

9. In general, does a person traveling alone speak to strangers? Are there exceptions? Are there some definite rules?

10. Describe four ways in which travelers have become acquainted with people in a strange locality and have still kept within the boundaries of good taste.

11. In traveling, are the rules of etiquette strict or lax? How does this help you?

12. Give a list of ways in which experienced travelers with a knowledge of the rules of etiquette can reduce the inconveniences of traveling.

13. Draft an imaginary business trip, in the form of a diary, showing all expenses and actions connected with the trip.



## **17. THE BUSINESSMAN'S FAMILY**

There are occasions, sometimes frequent, when the person in business needs his family's cooperation. When these occasions arise, a man's reputation may be enhanced by the good manners of his wife and children just as surely as by his own.

### **WHEN A MAN CONDUCTS HIS BUSINESS AT HOME**

The doctor and the real estate agent who conduct their business entirely at home have certain rooms devoted to busi-

ness use, aside from those reserved for family life. Some lawyers, accountants, and others, who have offices downtown, need to use their homes occasionally for receiving clients who are unable to call during the daytime.

**Answering the door.** In some houses there is confusion every time the doorbell rings. The children all run to see who is calling, and they either stand peering out through the glass and refuse to open the door, or they open it so suddenly and so wide that the caller's first view may be the end of a bathrobe as someone tries to hurry out of sight. Maid service is not necessary. In fact, if there were a maid, she would probably be busy washing the dinner dishes. All that a visitor expects is that someone—the man, his wife, or an older child—shall come to the door promptly.

The visitor is ushered into the room that serves as a temporary office. If he remains standing, he is invited to be seated. If he is wearing a heavy coat, he is asked whether he would care to take it off. Then, if the businessman still does not know of the visitor's arrival, it is announced to him. When the businessman himself has greeted his client at the door, he will probably hang the visitor's coat on a rack or in a closet, if he knows that the visit will take fairly long.

**Privacy.** In some houses the layout of the rooms is not conducive to privacy. Between the living room and the dining room there may be an archway without a door. An apartment may be very small, with an alcove off the living room serving as the only other room.

It would be too great a strain on home life for a man to expect his family to stay cloistered in their rooms or in a kitchenette, evening after evening; but in the case of only occasional business callers it is reasonable to ask for a little cooperation. Since the husband's success in business benefits his whole family, it is to their own advantage to afford his

clients privacy and quiet for carrying on negotiations, when such an occasion arises.

**The room's appearance.** When there are children, it is hardly possible to keep things looking always at their best. An understanding visitor will not give a second thought to the scratched furniture of which the anxious mother is so conscious. As long as things are in order, a room should be comfortable enough for visitors. Newspapers can be folded, ash trays emptied, and the pillows straightened. If there are children in the family, their toys may need to be taken out of the way. General housework is attended to often enough as a matter of routine, so that it is only a poor manager who has to run around scrubbing and sweeping, just before somebody is expected.

**The telephone.** Although not everyone accommodates clients after office hours, most professional men have occasion to conduct some of their business over the telephone at home. For this reason, it is important not only to teach the children how to answer the telephone, but to impress upon the maid, when there is one, the necessity of taking messages accurately.

When the call is for someone who is at home, the one who answers says, "Just a moment, please," and goes at once to call that person.

When the call is for someone who is not at home, the one who answers the telephone says, "Mr. Smith is not in. Do you wish to leave a message?"

In order not to keep anyone waiting on the line while a hunt goes on for pencil and paper, a pad and a pencil may be kept tied to the telephone. When a message has been jotted down, the slip of paper is placed on the particular shelf or table where the businessman is in the habit of looking for his mail and notes.

A child can learn at an early age how to answer the telephone, but he may still be too young to be able to remember a message correctly or to write it down. If such a youngster is taught to call his mother, instead of hanging up the receiver after answering, the caller will be saved the trouble of calling again and again until he is finally answered by someone older.

#### TELEPHONE CALLS FROM FAMILY TO OFFICE

When a man has no private office and telephone of his own at his place of work, it is difficult for him to receive personal calls with any degree of privacy. Even though a firm may make no rule against personal telephoning, the conversation is necessarily restricted by the fact that others who have to work near by cannot help overhearing what is said in the office or workroom.

Realizing this, a considerate wife will, of course, save her husband the embarrassment of carrying on a personal conversation in public, and therefore will not telephone to him unless it is necessary. Whenever something does require her talking to him before the day is over, she keeps the conversation brief and phrases her questions so that hardly more than "Yes" or "No" is needed in answer. In extreme cases of thoughtlessness, an employer may ask the worker to tell his wife or his girl friend not to keep calling up all the time. However, the women are few who would knowingly jeopardize a man's job.

Even a man who has a telephone at his personal disposal in work hours does not always find it easy to receive personal calls. The telephone may ring just as he is in the midst of putting over a convincing argument with a business visitor; or the "big boss" may be less than 2 feet away doing some talking of his own. Unless a wife's message is of hair-raising

importance, she may expect her husband to give her a hint when he's busy. The customary method is by the polite and businesslike "Can I call you back?" or "Will you be there if I call you a little later?" This should make it evident to the wife that her husband's position will grow more awkward if he is kept at the telephone.

#### VISITING THE OFFICE

If a man owns his business, it probably will not disturb him much if members of his family visit him, as long as they keep in the background; but it may make an unfavorable impression on customers if members of the proprietor's family sit around watching and appraising. When there are young children, they are almost sure to get in the way, and this detracts still more from the businesslike atmosphere that the public expects.

When a man is in the employ of someone else, it is almost always unwise for him to encourage personal visits during working hours. The boss may tell him outright that his family should not come in so often, and this will prove embarrassing. If his wife's visits are too frequent, she may be subjected to little indignities, such as not being offered a chair or even not being greeted by those who find her continual presence suggestive of spying. All such ill feeling can be avoided by holding family visits to a minimum.

An occasional brief visit, however, can hardly cause disadvantage. Anyone who works for a large concern, especially, may be so confined to his office that it is not easy for him to go out to meet his wife at the bank to sign papers or to start his son off to college. The family visitor in such a case greets the receptionist with a pleasant "Good morning" or "Good afternoon" and asks, "May I, please, see Mr. Edward Smith?"

On a first visit, a self-introduction is added, "I'm Mrs. Smith" or "I'm his son" or "I'm his daughter." Even if the visitor is familiar with the place and knows the way to the private office in question, good manners usually require him to pause and ask the receptionist, "Is Mr. Smith busy?" or "Shall I go right up?" However, if the receptionist serves chiefly as an information clerk for the convenience of strangers and simply directs visitors to secretaries, it is enough for the family visitor merely to smile and nod when walking past.

If the man has a secretary, the visitor greets her and waits until he is told to go in. If some other visitor is already in the office, it would be more in keeping with business procedure for the secretary to call the businessman through the intercommunication system or to go in with a note, than for the member of the family to open the door and look in.

The manners of a wife and children reflect directly on the father. When a secretary can say, "Mrs. Smith is perfectly lovely," Mr. Smith's stock goes up. A business friend gives him a boost that's as good as a letter of recommendation when he says, "I met Tom's boy the other day. There's a fellow to be proud of."

#### HOW A MAN REFERS TO HIS FAMILY

**In conversation.** When a man has occasion in business to refer to his wife, he speaks of her as "Mrs. Smith" or "my wife." In earlier days, the former was considered the only correct usage for a business environment, but the second form is used very often now by men of good taste. If Tom Smith and Bill Jones are close friends outside business, as well as in the office, and if their wives join them in making foursomes, the men refer to them as "Peg" and "Mary," when speaking to each other during a business day, as well as after business hours.

**Making introductions.** If a man has occasion to ask his wife to come to his office, he sees that she and his secretary are introduced. On her first visit, Mrs. Smith, when she comes in and asks to see Mr. Smith, will identify herself to the secretary. When the secretary tells him, "Mrs. Smith is here," he comes out of his office and greets his wife. Turning so that he faces both women, he says, "I believe you've already met Miss Jones." Mrs. Smith says whatever comes to mind—"Yes, we just met" or "Yes, it didn't take us long to get acquainted." After all three have continued talking for a minute or so, Mr. Smith may say to his wife, "My office is this way," holding the door for her as she enters.

If a wife accompanies her husband on her first visit to his office, he makes the introduction as soon as they enter the office where his secretary is seated—"Miss Jones, I should like you to meet my wife." Each of the ladies may simply acknowledge the introduction with the customary "How do you do" and a friendly smile; but if they have previously talked over the telephone together, one of them may feel like saying, instead, "Oh, Mrs. Smith (or Miss Jones), I'm so glad to meet you." The ladies may or may not shake hands when they are introduced. On the way out, Mrs. Smith says, "Good-by, Miss Jones. I'm so glad to have met you."

When introducing a young child, a man says, "Miss Jones, this is Billy." When a man's son and daughter are grown up, however, the father says, "I believe you've already met Miss Jones," if he finds them talking to the secretary when he comes out of his office. Otherwise, he introduces them as he would on any occasion—"Miss Jones, I should like you to meet my daughter, Mrs. White," or "Miss Jones, my daughter Mary," or "Miss Jones, may I introduce my son Fred."

There are many variations, all equally good, that follow the simple, underlying rule for making introductions: a



gentleman is introduced *to* a lady, and a younger person is introduced *to* an older or a more distinguished person of the same sex. Rare exceptions are mentioned in Chapter 7. In that chapter, as well as in Chapter 5, the secretary will find further information on greeting people.

#### RECEIVING A GIFT FROM BUSINESS FRIENDS

When a married couple receives a gift from the husband's business associates, the wife is expected to send a written note of thanks. Although she may not know personally any of the senders, it is gracious for her to use the salutation, "Dear Friends." If the present is from the firm and was not paid for by the employees, the letter is addressed to the president or whatever person was responsible for seeing that it was given, as, "Dear Mr. ——."

The wife ends her note with a cordial closing, such as "Most sincerely" or "Very sincerely," and signs her name, Mary Smith. Although her husband's name is not included in the signature, a wife includes him in the text by some such phrase as "My husband and I are so delighted with . . ." or, "the beautiful lamp for our new home."

Sometimes a couple may receive a present from someone outside the firm who knows the husband through business. Even though the wife may not have met the person, she sends a cordial handwritten note. Her husband adds his thanks verbally, the next time the two men meet. If the one who sent the present lives out of town and is not likely to be seen for some time, it is customary for the husband either to include a paragraph of appreciation the next time he sends a business letter, or to dictate a separate letter of thanks. In either case, he signs the letter personally. This is in addition to his wife's letter.

## ENTERTAINING BUSINESS FRIENDS

Some men have found it advantageous to entertain their business friends and acquaintances after working hours. Especially when a friend is on a business trip from out of town, the days are often too short for both men to discuss matters thoroughly, so that time spent together in the evening is mutually helpful.

Before asking anyone home to dinner, it is best for a man to call up his wife in private as early in the day as he can, to make sure that she will be in a position to manage successfully. Even though he may protest that all she need do is to set another place at the table, there is always more to be done than that.

A woman likes to have things as attractive as she can for guests. Fresh flowers or a special kind of dessert will give evidence that she went to a little extra effort for them; and if there is time for more preparation, she's happy to show that she considers her husband's friends worth the trouble. Few businessmen are handicapped by wives who are unwilling to provide a cordial home atmosphere.

Nevertheless, there are times—when the kitchen is being repainted or when the twins are in bed with sniffles—that put to a severe test a wife's pleasure in having company. Despite a woman's polite assurance to a guest that she loves having his company, he knows when his presence is disturbing the household. His discomfort may be so acute that he can think of nothing but of getting away as early as possible, while afterward he will reflect with some irritation on the husband's questionable hospitality.

If there is a good hotel, restaurant, or club in town, it would be better if a man took his friends there when a visit at home might be inconvenient. Many men, especially in the

large cities, conduct all their business engagements in this way. A guest's evening is not spoiled by poor train connections from the suburbs back to the city, while if a wife works, it is pleasanter all round for the couple to take their guest out for dinner and then to invite him to their apartment to chat for the rest of the evening.

#### HELPING HIM BUILD A REPUTATION

A wife can seldom enumerate all the things that she does to help her husband build a reputation. Her good breeding, emphasized by consideration for her husband's feelings, makes it natural for her to do the right thing. Perhaps her greatest asset is her ability to keep business secrets. The lawyer has interesting cases that he would like to talk over with his wife. The department manager has a little advance information and he'd like to get his wife's opinion on it. The buyer is about to make a scoop that he's anxious to describe. These men, like many others in scores of businesses and professions, find that it helps them to be able to discuss their affairs with a sympathetic listener; but, if one word is repeated outside, they find to their sorrow how it may damage their reputations.

A wife guards her husband's interests, not only by her own observance of the strictest secrecy, but by her care to teach the children never to repeat business talks that they may overhear. It's wasted effort for the mother to plead ignorance to the bridge club about her husband's business if Junior and Mary are out in the yard retailing to the bridge members' children all that they have overheard. There are those who have said that the training they received as children in guarding the business of others was one of the best lessons they had carried into their own careers after growing up.

The same respect that is given to a man's confidences is given to the work that he brings home. The report that he takes from the office to read at leisure and the brief case full of work that he plans to finish over the week end generally hold little interest as reading material for others. However, there have been times when a family failed to notice what was thrown into the fireplace or what sister had taken to cut up for paper dolls; so that papers that were valuable—even irreplaceable—have been lost. Any such unfortunate incident may have given a man the reputation for carelessness in business when it has not been actually his fault.

As to the question of a wife's making social contacts to help her husband along in business, opinions vary. The following comments have been expressed by a few executives and their wives:

*In favor*

"When two couples are friendly and one of the men gets ahead of the other, he sometimes sees that his friend is given opportunities."

"When a couple is new in a community, the men whom the husband works with are the first people he knows."

"A wife has the chance to praise her husband's qualities, like his industry and good humor and so on. When appropriately placed so as not to become irritating, these homespun words of praise can help his reputation with his business associates."

*Against*

"When a wife dislikes the other man or his wife personally, she can tolerate an occasional social evening together, but she won't be able to disguise her feelings if the dates become numerous."

"When two men work in the same firm, they are inclined to 'talk shop' when they take their wives out for a foursome. It is

rude of them to carry on a conversation in which the wives are not interested; yet when the women do show interest by joining in, the husbands blame them afterward for saying the wrong thing. I have a lot of relatives, and I know of a good many quarrels starting that way among the couples."

"When a friendship has no more basis to it than a desire to get ahead on the other fellow's shoulders, each one is ready to sacrifice his 'friend' to further his own interests. The innocent victim will be misquoted, or lies will spread about him and his family, which seem authentic coming from the couple who know him so well outside of business."

"Sometimes social contacts help, but an able man doesn't have to depend on them."

"Business climbing on the social ladder is dynamite."

Whether or not a wife mixes with the people her husband works with, there are other social affairs in which the people he knows through business will meet her. His firm may have an annual party, his business club may have at least one dinner meeting to which members may bring their wives, the lodge where he has made pleasant contacts with other businessmen in the city will be likely to hold frequent ladies' nights.

At all these affairs a woman has the opportunity to prove by her charming manners that she is an asset to her husband socially. When she is friendly and agreeable to everyone, she not only has a better time herself, but she shows that she knows what is expected of any guest.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. How would you receive a business visitor calling at your home to see a member of your family?
2. In what ways can you help make things comfortable for a visitor calling at your home to transact business with you?

3. How would you answer the telephone at home when the call is for

- a. Someone who is at home?
- b. Someone not at home?

4. How can you handle a personal telephone call at work courteously when it is not convenient for you to continue the conversation?

5. What thoughtfulness is expected from the family of a businessman or a businesswoman in the matter of telephoning to a place of employment?

6. What thoughtfulness is expected from the family of a businessman or a businesswoman in the matter of visiting a place of employment? Does the situation vary if a person is a member of a large or of a small organization?

7. If your oldest boy should call at your office to pick up a package, should you introduce him to your secretary? If so, how?

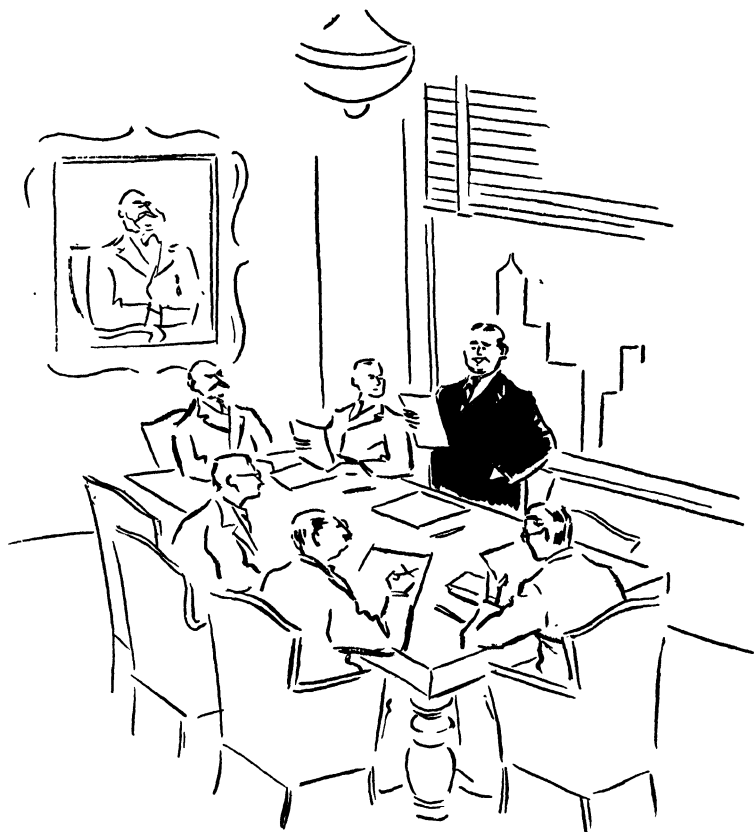
8. Assume that you and your wife give a picnic each summer at your camp and invite the crowd from the office. At Christmas, your wife receives a gift from them. How does she express her appreciation?

9. How is appreciation shown for a gift from your associates outside the firm?

10. When would you be most likely to entertain business friends at home?

11. To help a man or a woman build a reputation in business, what is the most important rule of etiquette that the family can practice? What harm can result when it is not observed?

12. Should a wife try to help her husband in business by making social contacts?



## **18. MEETINGS AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

Meetings are so important a part of business, it is fortunate that there are such excellent opportunities in school to learn something about them in clubs, debating teams, and classes in parliamentary law. For the student who is preparing to be a secretary there are classes in speed shorthand. For the young

man planning to make salesmanship his career, his experience in note taking at lectures will enable him to get the maximum benefit from training classes and sales meetings.

With the knowledge gained in school as a foundation, it will not be hard to understand the following established practices, which contribute to the successful conduct of a meeting.

#### IN PREPARATION

The efficient executive, first of all, considers whether or not people can spare the time to attend a meeting. Instead of leaving their work, making a trip back and forth, and putting in time at the session, they might be able to give their views on a subject just as effectively by replying to a questionnaire.

In cases in which it will be necessary to hold a meeting, when the people are notified, the next step is to have all material collected and assembled for orderly presentation. If a new subject is to come under discussion, the executive or his secretary tries to obtain all pertinent information in advance. If a current subject is to be discussed further, a leader would be showing disregard for everyone's time if he had nothing new to tell them since the time of their previous meeting.

When time permits, it is helpful to have mimeographed a list of the items to be brought up for action. If a copy of these agenda is given to each person on his arrival, this will help a meeting proceed more smoothly than it would if people were to digress and interrupt, discussing matters ahead of schedule.

If a meeting is to be held in an office, the secretary sees that chairs are dusted and that ash trays are emptied and wiped clean. If the meeting is to be held in a special room, she should let the porter know in time to have the place



swept and dusted. In a large room, when people are to be seated around a table, one ash tray is placed between every two places. When there is no table, the floor-model type of stand is used, for no one is expected to balance an ash tray on his knees. A well-equipped meeting room will have one floor stand to place in front of every third chair. When the supply of stands is scant, the nonsmokers will show consideration by taking the seats farthest from the stands.

At a board meeting and for other small groups, chairs are placed around a large table. The chairman sits at the head of the table. For large groups an individual table or a desk is placed at one end of the room for the leader. It produces a more relaxed atmosphere if the chairs, instead of being lined up in straight rows, are placed in a semicircle. This arrangement also makes it easier for those sitting in the back to see between the heads of those in front. There should be enough space between the chairs to prevent people from hitting their elbows as they take notes.

Poor lighting and ventilation can make people feel so uncomfortable that they find it difficult to give the best of attention to the proceedings. To help solve the lighting problem, chairs should be so placed that the occupants will not be facing windows. If the leader needs to use a desk light, the shade can be tipped so that the light will not shine in anyone's eyes. Providing good ventilation is somewhat difficult. When the temperature of a room is at a comfortable reading, crowding and smoking will make the place stuffy; on a winter day, if the windows are opened, the stuffiness is banished, but so is the warmth. Sometimes one window can be left partly open at the top; otherwise, it has proved advisable to interrupt a meeting every hour or so and open all the windows for a moment.

## THE SECRETARY'S ROLE AT A MEETING

The secretary to the chairman usually serves as secretary of the meeting. At a board of directors' meeting or at a stockholders' meeting this role is more generally filled by the attorney of the corporation or by a duly elected officer or clerk, while a girl with stenographic ability is required to sit in and take notes.

Before a meeting is called to order, the secretary or the clerk should see that everything needed is at hand: all papers and records pertaining to the meeting, a supply of sharpened pencils, the corporation seal, and a notebook with plenty of fresh pages. Members find it disturbing when someone goes popping in and out of the room to gather things that had been forgotten.

In cases in which the directors are not employed by the corporation and are not receiving a salary, they are frequently paid fees for attendance at meetings. In case the distribution of fees is delegated to the secretary, she requisitions from the treasurer of the corporation the amount required. She changes it into fresh bills of the correct denominations, places the money in envelopes, and distributes them as soon as the meeting is over. In firms that make payment by mailing a check, these checks should go out directly after the meeting is over. It used to be the custom for each of those who attended a directors' meeting to find a gold piece wrapped up and placed close to his luncheon plate, but gold pieces are no longer common currency.

On leaving her desk to go into the meeting room, a secretary makes sure that telephone calls and visitors will be taken care of while she and her boss are absent. Another secretary in an adjacent office might be able to fill in, or the switchboard operator and the receptionist may be asked to take

messages. When a meeting is in progress and it is necessary for an employee to come in with a message, it is not customary to knock on the door.

Whoever records the meeting should sit near the chairman. She will then be able to hear everything that he says, as well as what is said from the floor. Whenever she is unable to hear, the stenographer signals to the chairman by glancing up at him quickly. If he does not see her, she should say at once, "I didn't hear that." Then if the chairman deems it of sufficient importance, he can interrupt the speaker and ask for a repetition of what has been said. A girl should not hesitate to speak up because she dislikes to interrupt; on such occasions it is necessary.

Oftentimes a business meeting is held not in a large and well-appointed room, but in an executive's somewhat cramped office space. It may be a meeting of department heads or of officers of the employees' club or of all employees within a department. To guard her employer against interruptions, a secretary usually remains at her desk outside the office. When employees within a department are called to a meeting, the secretary can help best by being ready to answer their unattended telephones.

**Luncheon.** At a board meeting or at a meeting of department heads within a firm, luncheon often has to be served. When the agenda are heavy, a meeting sometimes runs from 10 o'clock in the morning until late afternoon. When a firm has cooking facilities with a private dining room adjacent, there is no problem of taking care of people. They leave the meeting in a group, find a table attractively set, order from the regular menu, and are served by the dietician.

In a firm which has no private dining room, but which has its own lunchroom or community kitchen, the food might be prepared on the premises and carried by elevator to the board

room. If there is much occasion for this type of service, the dietician may require a steam table on wheels, in order to be able to serve hot foods properly.

When there is no cafeteria, food can be ordered from a restaurant or a caterer and served in the board room. Some restaurants are well equipped with electric broilers, chafing dishes, and coffee makers in which they can transport and reheat complete meals.

Sometimes the secretary to the chairman is told in advance that luncheon is to be ordered; at other times, the group may not decide until nearly 1 o'clock. When the notice is short, sandwiches and bottles of milk usually have to suffice. When more time is allowed for preparation, the secretary is expected to order a meal.

Creamed dishes made of chicken, fish, or eggs are generally easy to transport. When these are cooked individually in small casseroles and ringed with mashed potatoes, serving them offers no problem at all.

When people are sitting all day, they'll prefer a dessert more digestible than pie. Ice cream is the chief favorite. Canned fruit is always good, either mixed or of a single kind. When you place your order, ask to have the cans kept in the refrigerator during the morning.

In placing the order for the luncheon, the secretary requests china, silver, and double the number of napkins. A napkin is used for each place mat, since few restaurants can furnish a tablecloth large enough for a board table.

If the secretary has had to attend the meeting, she asks someone to send in a note to her employer as soon as the food has arrived. At the next convenient break in the proceedings, he will announce, "Luncheon is here." The members should pick up their papers and whatever paraphernalia they have been working with and find places for these—on the window

sills, in their pockets, or in unoccupied chairs. If they forget to do so, the chairman will not hesitate to remind them.

Caterers are experienced in setting up and serving a meal without assistance, and a secretary might be in their way if she tried to help. However, when such a meal is furnished only occasionally by a firm's cafeteria or by the restaurant across the street, the secretary will probably need to take charge. In that case, when the members have left the room to wash up, she dusts the table and then sets it as quickly as possible. She fills her employer's desk carafe with fresh water to use as a pitcher for the drinking glasses. She is alert to see that no hot dishes are placed on chairs or on the table; sometimes an inexperienced assistant has come in and ruined a costly piece of furniture by setting down a hot container.

When everyone has been seated, the dietician or a restaurant employee starts serving food from the containers onto the plates. The secretary serves the guests just as properly as she has been taught at home. Dishes are passed at the left, used dishes removed from the right. Bread, butter, salt, and pepper are removed before the dessert is served. Careful attention is paid to little things, such as offering a second cup of coffee, pouring milk into glasses, and replenishing the water.

When all have finished eating, the secretary clears the table, stacks the plates and silver as quietly as possible, and sees that the things are quickly taken out of the room.

**Serving tea.** Hospitals, libraries, and many other public and semipublic institutions are staffed with paid employees, but have appointed boards of unpaid trustees to control the budgets. Such a group meets with the institution's administrative staff at regular periods. Since the board members are outsiders who give their time and effort freely, it is considered a gracious evidence of appreciation to serve tea after a

meeting. In one small hospital there is a beautiful silver service that was given, years ago, by a grateful patient. The water is boiled in the kitchen and poured into the silver kettle just before the tray is carried in.

A certain enterprising dress shop has an advisory board of professional and society women. After each meeting, a handsome antique samovar is used for serving tea.

Some tea sets are constructed for heating by electricity. Others have spirit lamps, to be lighted at the table. Whatever the facilities for serving tea, two points should be kept in mind: the water must be boiling—bubbling and steaming—not merely hot; and the boiling water should be poured into the teapot at the serving table. Tea is not made in another room and then brought in.

As the average business girl usually has no chance between 9 and 5 o'clock to practice serving tea, unless her job calls for it, here is a detailed description of the way that tea is served after a trustees' meeting in one large institution.

The secretary to the director and the secretary to the comptroller officiate as hostesses. Their equipment is inexpensive, but they follow the procedure for serving tea exactly as if they had a gleaming service costing a thousand dollars.

Before each meeting they take the china and spoons from a closet and go over each piece with a soft towel, to be sure there isn't a speck of dust. The petty-cash fund provides for shopping at noon for cookies or little cakes, some lemons, and a jar of light cream. Sugar and tea are kept fresh in tightly covered containers and need only occasional replenishing.

As soon as a meeting is adjourned, one of the secretaries spreads a cloth runner across an end of the big table. Then she goes into the office for her tray. On the tray, before carrying it in and laying it on the runner, she places the following

articles: cups and saucers (cups may be stacked two and three together); teaspoons; a small dish and a fork, with slices of lemon; a pitcher of cream; a bowl of sugar; a china teapot into which a quantity of dry tea has been put; and a strainer.

The other secretary comes in with a decorative copper kettle, filled with water that has been boiled on the electric cooking plate in the employees' rest room. In her other hand she carries a colorful hot-plate stand of asbestos, so that the kettle can rest safely on one corner of the runner.

The girl who brought in the tray sits down at the table and pours water from the kettle into the teapot. She is now ready to serve.

Most of the people are standing around, glad to stretch a bit after a long meeting. The secretary who is serving glances toward one of the ladies, smiles, and says, "I believe you like your tea with cream, don't you, Mrs. Brown?" Mrs. Brown is pleased that her preference is remembered and probably says so. When the secretary does not remember, however, she asks what the preference is.

Ladies are served first—if they happen to be near—but if a lady is talking with someone at the far end of the room the secretary-hostess doesn't wait for her. She goes on pouring tea for whoever is nearest.

The second girl, after leaving the kettle of water, has gone back for a smaller tray, on which there are the following items: a plate with cookies or cake, or both; a pile of tea plates with a napkin upon each plate (to eliminate the expense and problem of laundering outside the home, pretty little paper napkins are used).

The girl goes around the room with this tray, extending it to those who already have their tea. Each one takes a plate and a napkin, and then puts on his plate whatever refresh-

ments he chooses. Sometimes the men won't bother with the individual plates, especially if they are standing.

Experience has taught the girls that some people like more than one cup of tea. When one of the secretaries is not busy serving, she takes the kettle out, refills it, and waits until the water boils, carries it back again and asks, "Would you like some hot tea?"

The tea hour is entirely informal, with everyone, the secretaries included, laughing and joking and having a very good time. There's no talk of business now.

When the trustees have left, the members of the staff go back to their offices, and the secretaries finish their job as hostesses by picking up carefully, washing the dishes, and putting everything away to be ready for the next meeting.

#### STOCKHOLDERS' AND BOARD MEETINGS

When a large number of stockholders is expected to attend a meeting, several men or women clerks are appointed to act as ushers. They may conduct the stockholders to seats, especially those who are elderly, or they may remain at the doors to check the attendance. As each person arrives, a clerk takes his name and address and asks whether he is a stockholder or whether he has been appointed proxy for a stockholder. The clerk immediately checks the information against a list that he has at hand. This list should have been previously verified, typed, and checked for inaccuracies; otherwise, unpleasant confusion may result.

It is customary to wait no more than 5 minutes for late-comers. Many chairmen will wait no longer than 2 minutes. As for starting a meeting ahead of time if everyone is present, there is no question but that it is the sensible thing to do. At a stockholders' meeting, however, care should be taken to see that everyone actually is there. Such a meeting is not legal



if it is held before the exact time specified in the notice of the meeting, unless every one of the stockholders, or his proxy, is present. An alert minority stockholder has been known more than once to make a legal issue afterward of the fact that a meeting had been convened ahead of time.

In the smaller corporation, meetings are often held in an informal manner. Larger corporations, however, generally require them to be conducted with considerable formality. In any case, it is essential that the chairman know thoroughly both the rules of parliamentary procedure and the requirements of his corporation's bylaws. When there is conflict between the two, the bylaws take precedence. The other members of a board would be working at a disadvantage if they, also, did not know the proper rules governing the conduct of their meetings. Big deals have been won by businessmen who had a keen understanding of their rights and put it to use.

#### THE CONFERENCE, ROUND TABLE, AND OPEN FORUM

The top executive of a large business once stated to some friends that he did most of his work in conference. When asked whether he spent as much as half his time that way, he replied, "I'd say, even more—two-thirds, perhaps. Experience has taught me the advantages of group thinking over individual thinking, and I never make a decision on an important problem without first getting the opinions of others."

When several executives were told of this, they agreed that the value of the conference cannot be overestimated. But the men were all emphatic in saying that, regardless of the length of time that may be spent in group discussion, unless a conference is conducted properly it can amount to nothing. The poorly conducted gathering, it was pointed out, is one of the worst time wasters in business.

Like every other type of meeting, a conference must be planned ahead of time. The experienced leader has no need of writing notes, but he has things well organized in his mind.

1. He is sure, first of all, that he understands the problems and the facts at hand clearly enough to interpret them to the group.

2. A conference is opened on an informal and amiable tone. There are no parliamentary rules of procedure; and instead of calling a meeting to order, the leader is more likely to ask Bill what his golf score was over the week end.

3. After the leader has explained the matter that is up for discussion, he encourages everyone to take part. It is no conference when the boss simply gets a group of people together to give them orders or to project his own ideas. If comments are slow in coming, he may ask for answers direct. You will see an experienced leader turn to one of the members and say, "Jim, you've had dealings with that firm before. How did they act?" And he may ask another member, "Miss Smith, on your latest trip to the Coast, how were things at the new plant?" Such questions as "What do you think, Jim?" and "Have you any comments, Miss Smith?" are too general to stimulate helpful answers.

When the members have many things to say, the leader has to see that they don't all talk at once. Without adopting a dictatorial attitude, he can try to confine the talking to one person at a time by looking directly at him as he talks; this is intended to discourage others from speaking, because they are not at the moment being recognized. When this does not work, the leader may break in at the slightest pause and ask, "What was that again, Jim? I didn't hear." The others should remain quiet to give Jim a chance to be heard. As soon as Jim has finished, the leader should be sure to look toward each of the others who had been talking and ask agreeably,

"You had something to say, too, didn't you, Bill?" or "I believe you have some ideas on the subject?"

4. Unless a conference is kept in hand, it can easily be sidetracked. Tempting as it may be to turn to something else, the leader is considerate of the passing time. No one will enjoy staying late into the night to catch up with his work.

5. The participants make the leader's job unnecessarily difficult when they fail to observe good manners. The most common breach is for someone to go into a little huddle with his neighbor and give his views privately. When he receives no response but a noncommittal "m-m-m-m," he may take the hint and stop. Another infraction, occurring less frequently, is that of using the conference room as a soapbox for airing personal and petty grievances. Even when they are related to the matter under consideration, these prejudices clog the proceedings and have no real value.

6. When matters have been settled—or partly settled, depending on the complications—the results should be neatly summarized. Everyone likes to leave with a clear knowledge of what has been accomplished and with the feeling that he has contributed something.

One very able corporation president always ends a conference on the same courteous tone that he maintains in all his relations. He never fails to give credit where it is due, to include by name as many of the members as possible: "As Mr. Smith has put it so well, we will need to . . ." "The figures will be worked out under Fred's supervision and then turned over to Jim for analysis."

"Round table" and "round-table discussion" are other names given to the conference. These terms are used more frequently to describe nonbusiness discussions, such as those held by students, community clubs, and unorganized groups brought together by a common purpose. "Open forum" is

still another term that means about the same as conference, but it is applied to large groups, whether in or out of business life. The chairman is usually called a moderator.

Whatever the name of a meeting—conference, round table, or open forum—if it is not to end in failure, it needs to be conducted with consideration on everyone's part.

#### A COMPANY TRAINING CLASS

People who are accustomed to working every day usually find it extremely difficult to readjust themselves to the temporary routine of the training class. Studying is hard, and so is concentration in the classroom. An additional drawback may be unfamiliarity with the city in which the group has been assembled. When an instructor understands this and does his best to make conditions comfortable, his course will produce employees who are both well trained and kindly disposed toward the management.

Classes are sometimes held in a room on the firm's premises. Lacking this space, a room should be hired near by, preferably in the same hotel where the out-of-town trainees will stay. When a class is composed of all girls or all men, a firm often makes reservations at a Y.W.C.A. or a Y.M.C.A., or at a club. It has been proved to be unfair to a group, as well as difficult for the instructor, to use an office, where the ordinary interruptions of a business day can be most distracting.

When reservations for bedrooms are made, it is customary to assign two persons to a room with twin beds. All hotel bills are sent direct to the firm for payment. The trainees usually eat their meals wherever they wish, pay cash, and turn in expense accounts for reimbursement.

In order that their personal funds need not be touched, each of the trainees is given a cash advance. If they have

been hired through a firm's branch offices, they are advanced some money and given their train tickets before it is time for them to leave. If negotiations for the training have been carried on through correspondence, the instructor will see to it that a train ticket and a check are mailed to each trainee before he leaves home.

If the class is to last only a few days, the advance should be large enough to cover a person's total expenses. At the end of his training, an adjustment would be made of the difference between the amount originally advanced and the amount that he had expended. When a class is to last several weeks, as it sometimes does, an advance should take care of the trainee approximately through his first week. At the end of each succeeding week, he would be required to turn in a new expense account, which the firm should honor at once.

Considering the great amount of time and money invested in him, the trainee has an obligation to the management. It is most important that no one should take advantage of a course just to get a free trip; anyone who does this is bound to regret later that he earned so poor a recommendation in business. A trainee who has started off sincere and anxious to profit from his instruction is expected to take good care of his health, so that he will not be ill and miss classes.

Like any first day at something new, the opening session of a company training class makes a lasting impression on the newcomers. They may leave it mindful of the careful preparation for welcoming them, or they may reach the end of the day wondering why the instructor hasn't learned to do things in the right way.

The training programs given by a number of companies have been shown to be so nearly alike that a composite description is given here.

When people come from widely scattered points, they are

told ahead of time by letter where and when they will be expected to meet. If the group is large, it assembles in the room where the classes are to be held. When the group is small, the members may be asked to meet at the office of the person who will instruct them; he then escorts them to the classroom.

As has been indicated earlier in this chapter, a small group sits around one table, with the instructor at the head. When the group is large, the instructor is the only one who has a table.

It is generally left to the participants to take whatever chairs they wish. At his place at the table—or on his individual chair—each one finds a notebook, a sharpened pencil, and a large envelope, if much material is to be put to use during the course.

The instructor has before him a loose-leaf book, in which his notes are bound. On the instructor's individual table, also, or on a small table at his right, are placed whatever articles may be required during each session for demonstration and distribution.

To the left of the instructor's place, and slightly to the rear, there is a blackboard. At the end of each day, a secretary sees that the chalk is replenished and that the eraser (or cloth) is shaken out. She does not wipe anything off the board unless her boss asks her to do so.

The instructor tells the participants to make themselves comfortable. If the weather is warm, he may say, "I don't think the ladies will mind if you remove your coats." If the weather is cold, some effort should be made to govern the temperature and fresh air of the room, as was explained earlier in this chapter.

Companies are very strict about attendance. So that there will be no misunderstanding, the instructor announces and

repeats carefully the hours when sessions and recesses will be held. When a person is late, he gives his excuse to the instructor at recess; if he forgets to do so, he is asked to explain. When anyone is absent, the instructor telephones to his hotel room during recess, to see whether he is ill.

Throughout the sessions, the instructor should stop at frequent intervals to ask whether there are questions. When he fails to do this, or when he fails to unravel a confusing subject, it is considered perfectly admissible for a class member to interrupt during a pause and to ask a question.

On the other hand, it would be considered rude to interrupt to make a comment, or to ask a question about something that is not at the moment being discussed. These contributions should be saved until the time for them; or, when they are not relevant to the class material, they may be taken up with the instructor at the end of the period.

In the business classroom it is not customary for people to raise their hands or to stand when they are to speak. The instructor may sit or stand, as he pleases.

At the end of the training period, the instructor is host to the group at a dinner. The company pays the expenses. If several department heads have assisted at the sessions, they are sometimes included as guests. The affair is planned ahead of time, so that reservations can be made at one of the city's better hotels or restaurants, with preference for one where there is music and entertainment. If some of the trainees live at such a distance that they will have to start for home soon after the closing session, the dinner is held the evening before.

**The president's address of welcome.** Either at the beginning of the program or on one of the days following, it is considered essential that the president of the company make a short address of welcome. The president and the instructor

may enter the room together and remain standing; or the president may enter while the instructor is seated and talking. In this case the instructor would stand to greet him. The trainees, in either case, remain seated.

Unless the class is very large, the instructor introduces the class to the president by reading each name. As he does so, each participant, man or woman, stands, looks at the president, smiles, and sits down again. The president acknowledges each introduction with a friendly nod and smile; sometimes for variation he repeats a name.

After the introductions, the president remains standing, but the leader sits down. The president then gives a little talk lasting no longer than 5 minutes. He speaks of his pleasure at meeting everyone, encourages them in taking the course, and repeats any promises that the company's representatives may have already made to the trainees regarding their jobs. He concludes by some such remark as "I'll now leave you to the very capable guidance of [name of instructor]." He takes leave of the instructor with a pleasant "good-by" or "see you later," and goes out.

#### THE BUSINESS CLUB

**Luncheons and dinners.** There are hundreds of clubs—local, national, and world-wide—that belong under the category of the business club. Some of them are concerned with civic problems almost as much as they are with the problems of running a business. Many of them issue magazines, buyers' guides, and other publications giving news of their particular branches of business; while practically all of them combine their weekly or monthly meetings with a luncheon or a dinner.

Such a luncheon or dinner is held in a private dining room of a restaurant or a hotel centrally located. When the new



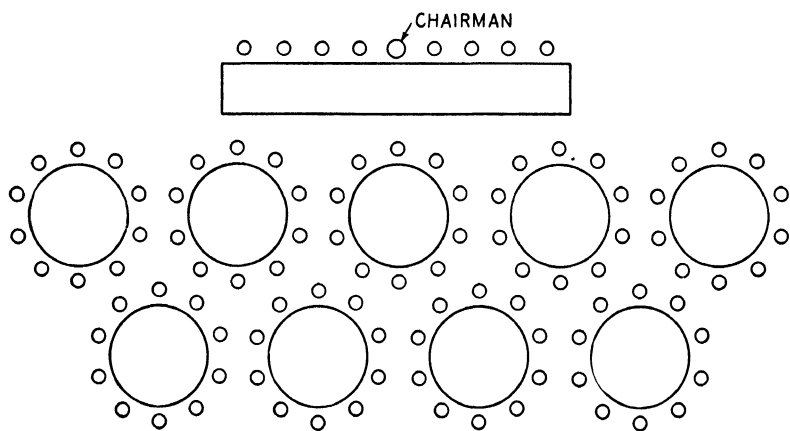
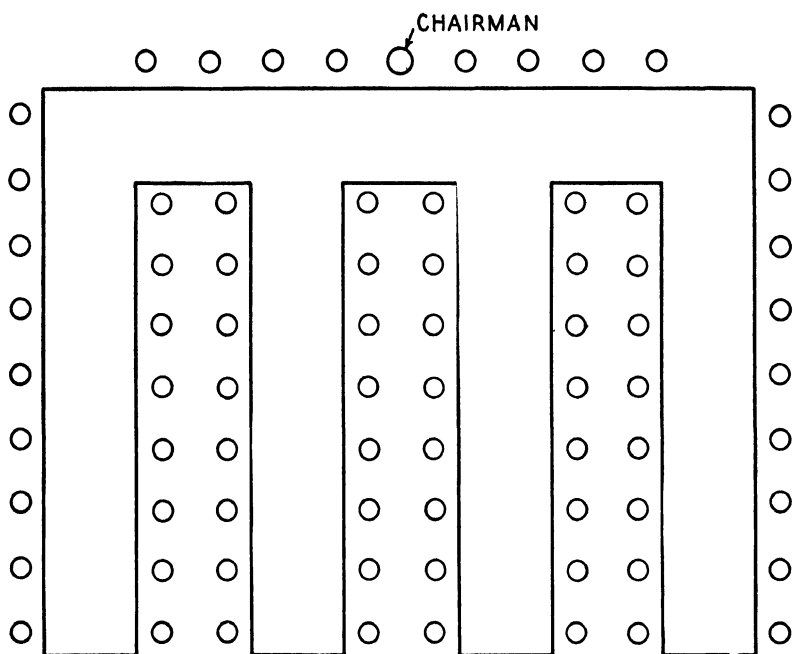
officers are elected at the final meeting in the spring, one of their first duties is to see that reservations are made for the entire following year.

*General seating arrangement.* For a group numbering 100 or fewer, it has been found sociable to arrange places at long tables branching off from the head table. For larger groups, an oblong head table and round general tables are used (see page 372). Seating arrangements at the head table are described in Chapter 19.

*The meal.* At the exact time announced in the yearly bulletin, the meal is served. Since people who work every day have appointments and other pressing matters to attend to in the afternoon, they will resent a delayed start.

There are no place cards. People sit wherever they wish, unless they are required at the head table. A person not only speaks to those on either side of him, but he at least smiles and says a few words to those opposite him at the same table. Conversation may range all the way from an appraisal of the biscuits to the intricacies of power politics. Anything of a general nature is harmless, but it is considered out of taste to use the occasion to censure a business competitor. The luncheon or dinner table is not the place, either, for discussing confidential plans and statistics concerning one's own organization.

*The meeting.* The chairman attracts the attention of the group by standing and lightly tapping his water glass with a pencil. As those near him stop talking, the silence is noted throughout the room and soon everyone is quiet. He calls the meeting to order, and proceeds with the business at hand, in accordance with the club's bylaws or rules of parliamentary procedure. The requirements are not rigid for a meeting of this type: no proxies are requested, and generally



there is not even a roll call; the chairman often refers to the other officers not by title, but as "Bill" and "Anna."

He concludes the business meeting with the words, "If there is no further business, I declare the meeting adjourned." Then he goes into the final feature of the day. (The procedure for introducing a speaker, together with information for those who will fill the role of speaker, are discussed in Chapter 19.) When the feature is over and the chairman has given cordial thanks, chairs are pushed back and people are free to leave in as hurried or as leisurely a fashion as they please.

If a member must leave early, he takes a place near the door, so that he can slip out quietly. The time to break away is just after the business meeting is over, or just after a speaker has finished. It is inconsiderate to get up and walk out while any speaker is talking. Some people purposely come late and leave early wherever they go, thinking that it is good advertising to be seen as much as possible. This method is about as subtle as being paged at the neighborhood movie.

**Membership.** Before joining a business club, a newcomer is usually taken first as guest to a meeting by someone in his firm who is a member; or a relative or a friend in a line of business similar to his own will take him to his club. The office managers have their own organization, the cost accountants have theirs, the C.P.A.'s have theirs, and so on—all comprised of men and women in allied business positions, yet broken down into specialized groups.

Nearly always the firm pays for a person's membership in a business club. In large firms, as many as a half dozen executives belong to the same business club. Pressure of duties and traveling may prevent them from all attending regularly, but it is felt that out of the group there will be some repre-

sentation at each session. Those who do belong generally get in touch with one another the day of the meeting, so that those who can go will leave together.

**Substitute attendance.** When an executive is unable to go to a meeting himself, he may ask someone to go in his place. If the speaker is one whose views he is particularly anxious to hear, he will probably ask his secretary to go so that she can take shorthand notes whenever they seem necessary. Otherwise, he asks her to go only if he thinks that she will personally enjoy it, and if he can spare her. He is more likely to use this occasion to give a young man or woman in a junior executive position the experience of attending and mingling with a new group.

Suppose that you are attending a meeting for the first time, to fill in for someone. You will try to get there about 10 minutes ahead of time, to be sure of not being late. The others are business people, too, and they'll feel that if they can be there everyone else should be.

A man checks his hat and heavy coat, but he always keeps on his suit jacket. A woman may prefer to keep her coat with her, if she is wearing a thin dress. During the meal she will throw her coat over the back of her chair, while during the speaking afterward she may be glad to have it to pull up around her shoulders. When wearing a suit, a woman is comfortable enough in the jacket, so that she can check a heavy coat. She keeps her hat on at a luncheon or at a business dinner when daytime clothes are worn.

Upon paying for your ticket, you will be given a card on which to write your name and the name of your firm. This is a sort of badge, to be attached near your collar as identification. No receipts are issued for payment; but you should be able to cash an expense account, on your return to work, without question. However, if your firm is one that requires

proof of some sort for every disbursement, turn in your badge with your expense slip when you return.

If you see someone with whom you are acquainted, it is courteous to speak to him if he is alone. If he is talking with others, you will use your judgment about breaking in. Even if he is someone from your own firm, it is usually better to wait until he sees you and greets you by name before you join his group. You will see people walking around, slapping this one and that one on the back and breaking into a group, but they have probably been coming to these meetings half a lifetime and they know many of the members very well.

You may sit or stand or walk around looking at the pictures on the wall, or idle the time in any way that you please until the hour set. Then as you see the others going in to the dining room, you go in, too, and find a chair. If you are attending in place of your boss, who is an officer, he or his secretary should have telephoned to one of the other officers, ahead of time, to explain that he could not attend and why. In the dining room, you simply take your place at one of the general tables and enter into conversation with those near you, exactly as if you were a member.

### THE CONVENTION

**Local.** An entire afternoon and evening are usually given over to a local convention. For sectional and national assemblies the time runs from 2 to 3 days, sometimes a week. A local convention is not precisely local, for business people may come to it from states near by. To save time traveling around the city, during such a short visit, they usually stay overnight at the hotel in which the convention is being held. The club's secretary is expected to take care of room reservations for them, and this is accordingly explained in the club's advance publicity.

The program for a short convention usually starts in the morning with registration for all members and a short business meeting for the officers and/or committees. The remainder of the program includes luncheon, speeches in the afternoon by business specialists, and dinner (informal dress). At the dinner, very brief talks may be given by several officers of visiting branches, but there is almost always a main address, anyway.

The responsibility for seeing that everything runs smoothly falls on the officers of the club's local branch. First on the list, it is their place to secure reservations at a good hotel where the group can be accommodated comfortably at night and where the meeting room or rooms will be large enough. There is no enjoyment in standing about in an airless room all the afternoon, trying to concentrate on what the speakers are saying.

As to the matter of securing the speakers, this may be a rather troublesome problem. Many of those who are especially good have been heard before, and business people cannot be expected to take time off from their packed schedules to listen to an old story. Not only should the speakers be new, but they should be authorities on their subjects and they should have something worth while to say.

Men seldom are accompanied by their wives on a short trip, but to accommodate those who might come, as well as to show courtesy toward the women members, several women in the local branch act as hostesses. If no women members are available, the secretaries of several members are asked to help out. As an obvious means of identification, the club furnishes them with corsages or bright ribbon badges. These hostesses help at the registration tables, mingle with the guests, and generally try to keep within sight.

**Sectional or national.** The following program, which was distributed at the national convention of a business organization, is an example of the activities at a big convention.

Sunday	4 P.M.	Registration in Colonial Room of out-of-town arrivals. Reception and tea with ladies of local branch as hostesses.
	8 P.M.	Movies in Colonial Room Tickets available at reduced rates for concert at Municipal Auditorium. Program will be posted on bulletin board near registration tables
Monday	9 A.M.	Continued registration of out-of-town arrivals
	10 A.M.	Registration of local members
	11 A.M.	Address by —— on the subject “——” in Green Room
	12 Noon	Luncheon music in mezzanine.
	12:30 P.M.	Luncheon in Green Room and Colonial Room. Chairman —— Speaker —— Subject, “——”
	2 P.M.	Wives of members can secure tickets at registration tables for fashion show at ——
	2:30 P.M.	Meeting of executive committee in parlor A
	2:30 P.M.	Meeting of nominating committee in parlor B
	2:30 P.M.	Meeting of memorial fund committee in Colonial Room

- 3-5 P.M. Open forum on the subject, "——,"  
with Messrs. ——, ——, and ——  
participating. Green Room
- 6 P.M. Dinner dancing and refreshments  
in the Colonial Room (informal  
dress)
- 7 P.M. Dinner in the Green Room and the  
Colonial Room  
Chairman ——  
Speaker ——  
Subject, "——"
- Tuesday 10 A.M. Sightseeing buses for the wives of  
members, side exit. Two-and-one-  
half hour trip visiting the follow-  
ing historic sites:  
.....  
The afternoon will be open, and  
maps will be distributed showing  
the theatrical and shopping dis-  
tricts
- 10 A.M. Meeting of the yearbook committee  
in the Colonial Room
- 10 A.M. Meeting of Committee on House  
Bill 1234 in parlor A
- 11 A.M. Address by —— on the subject,  
"——"
- 12 Noon Exhibition of industrial products in  
Colonial Room
- 1 P.M. Luncheon in Green Room  
Chairman ——  
Speaker ——  
Subject, "——"
- 2:30 P.M. Buses leave for tour of the ——  
Company's plant. Side exit
- 5 P.M. Coffee and musicale for wives in  
Colonial Room



- 5 P.M. Annual business meeting, election of officers and adoption of resolutions. Green Room
- 8 P.M. Annual dinner in ballroom (dinner coats)  
 Chairman ——  
 Speakers and subjects:  
 ——, “——”  
 ——, “——”  
 ——, “——”  
 Principal speaker ——, “——”

The hotel is prepared to handle all the physical labor. Chairs and tables are set up and removed, rooms are swept, and the furniture is placed in whatever positions may be desired. With its heavy stock of equipment and an experienced staff, the hotel management can take care of all food arrangements. Preparations for just one simple occasion, like the afternoon tea or the coffee musicale, would be a problem in a rented hall and unmanageable at home, for so large a number of guests. Yet here all the hostesses have to do is to be on time, to sit down and serve.

At the closing dinner there is usually enough interest in what the principal speaker will have to say for the local newspapers and trade magazines to send reporters. Even when a printed copy of the speech is given to the press ahead of time, the convention's publicity committee invites the editors to send representatives to the dinner. Many times, a speaker will make extemporaneous remarks that carry more significance than his entire prepared talk.

In every way that they can, the officers and the committee members are expected to look after the convenience of others. Both meeting rooms and bedrooms should be adequately furnished and attractive. The speeches and business meetings

should be important enough to make the trip worth while, but too heavy a schedule will tire out even the most enthusiastic and conscientious members.

It is especially considerate to keep in mind the wives of members and to arrange a program of entertainment that they will enjoy. No one can look more forlorn than the quiet little woman sitting in the lobby all day while her husband is busy going around from group to group.

When hundreds of people come from all parts of the country—frequently, from other countries—there is plenty of opportunity to show the thoughtfulness and assistance that characterize every good host.

#### PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Under the guidance of his teachers who serve as club advisers, a student will not only gain experience in talking before an audience, but he will be able to put into practice the rules of etiquette that govern parliamentary procedure. These are rules that have been established through long usage, in order that a meeting may proceed in fairness to everyone.

All the fine points of debate, amendments, precedence, and so on, cannot be discussed here because of lack of space, but a number of good books on the subject of parliamentary law are available. The following condensed information is offered, to help those who simply wish to know how to participate generally at meetings.

**Calling a meeting to order.** The chairman stands and, out of courtesy, the members cease all conversation among themselves.

At a luncheon or a dinner, when not everyone is sitting directly facing the chairman, he may find it necessary to rap lightly on his water glass with a pencil to attract attention.

Those not facing him should turn their chairs around to a more comfortable position, not forgetting to excuse themselves to any sitting next to them when they have to turn their backs.

When the room is quiet, the chairman announces, "The meeting will please come to order."

### **The order in which business is conducted**

1. The chairman says, "The secretary (or the clerk) will read the minutes of the previous meeting."

The chairman may then sit down and remain seated throughout the meeting if he wishes, except that he stands when he states a motion and puts it to a vote.

The secretary (or clerk) stands and reads his report. When the reading is finished, the chairman asks, "Are there any corrections?" If there are none, he says, "The minutes stand approved as read."

If a member finds an error in the report, he rises and says, "Mr. Chairman,<sup>1</sup> there is a mistake in such-and-such statement." Unless there are objections from other members, the chairman instructs the secretary to make the change. When no further corrections are forthcoming, the chairman says, "The minutes stand approved as corrected."

2. The chairman calls for the treasurer's report by saying, "The treasurer will read his report."

After the treasurer has read his report, the chairman asks, "Are there any questions?" If there are none, he continues, "The treasurer's report will be filed, subject to audit." A treasurer's report is not recorded as "approved," as are the minutes of the meeting and other reports. When the auditor

<sup>1</sup> When a woman presides, whether she is married or single, it is the custom for her to be addressed as "Madam Chairman."

submits his annual report it must be voted upon, and if it is accepted this has the effect of approving the treasurer's report.

3. The corresponding secretary is usually called on next. He is expected to read at this time such letters as do not require that action be taken; for example, letters of thanks for flowers or gifts that the club may have sent. Correspondence that requires action is reserved until the time that new business is taken up.

4. If there are other reports to be read, the chairman calls for them in the following order:

Board

Standing committees

Temporary committees

Delegates

5. The chairman brings up unfinished business by a brief introduction. For example, he might say, "At the last meeting it was decided to postpone until today the question of placing the scholarship fund in the same bank with the emergency fund." All unfinished business should be out of the way before new business is taken up.

6. The chairman usually calls for new business by asking, "What new business is there to come before the meeting?"

7. After all business has been disposed of, the chairman asks, "Is there no further business to come before the meeting?"

If silence shows that there is none, a member rises and says, "Mr. Chairman, I move we adjourn." The motion is seconded by another member, a vote is taken, and the chairman announces, "The meeting is adjourned."

At meetings where formality is not rigidly observed, the chairman might simply say, "If there is no further business, I declare the meeting adjourned."

**Voting.** When a matter is under discussion, any member is free to put it to a vote by rising and saying, "Mr. Chairman, I move that such-and-such be done." (A member who is so rude as to stand while another person is speaking or who approaches the chairman in an effort to secure attention is entitled to no recognition.)

Another member who is in agreement calls from his place, while seated, "I second the motion."

The chairman stands and says, "It has been moved and seconded that such-and-such. . . . Are there any remarks?" The secretary, or clerk, writes down the motion at once, to be able to include it accurately in the records of the meeting, and also to be able to accommodate any member by repeating the motion if repetition is requested.

Members are free to address the chair and to have their opinions heard. Sometimes no opinions are expressed, while on other occasions a proposition is the subject of discussion for many meetings, over a long period of time. The chairman, in all cases, must wait until there is no further participation by the members before he calls for a vote. In a large assembly, he should look around and ask, "Is there further discussion on the motion that was made and seconded to . . . ?" and should then repeat the motion.

Fairness on the part of the chairman in making the motion clear, will gain for him the confidence of the entire group, whereas an attempt by him to slide a motion through to a quick vote may be resented so bitterly by some members that a legal battle will result.

Quite often a motion is made without preliminary discussion, but the member who makes it must be sure that no other business is before the assembly at the time.

The usual method of voting is for the chairman to ask, "All those in favor say 'Aye.'" (Pause, while the "ayes" come

from the members in favor of the motion.) "All those opposed?" (Then those against the motion say "No.")

The chairman announces the result by saying, "The motion is carried," or "The motion is lost." If he prefers, he may say, "The 'ayes' have it," or, "The 'noes' have it."

When the chairman is in doubt as to the result of the voting because of the similarity in volume of the voices on each side, he asks, "Will those in favor of the motion please raise their right hands?" After he has counted the number of hands raised, he asks, "Those opposed?"

In cases of extreme doubt, he might even ask, "Will those in favor of the motion please rise?" Then, "You may be seated. Those opposed?"

Members are all bound to vote. Since failure to do so automatically gives assent, a member might as well do the courteous thing and give his "aye," together with the others.

In matters of routine, a chairman is not considered negligent if he cuts out motions and voting and simply states, "If there are no objections, such-and-such will be done." After a pause for possible objection, he says, "It is so ordered." If objection should develop, however, from a member who speaks up, a motion must be made and seconded to get the machinery going for deciding the matter.

**Committee appointments.** When it is voted to appoint a committee to carry out a certain task, the members of the committee are appointed by the chairman of the organization or by the assembly, depending on the requirements of the organization's bylaws. One of the members of the committee is designated chairman, either by the chairman of the organization or by the majority request of the assembly, again depending on the bylaws.

A committee chairman is expected to work in close cooperation with the rest of his committee, whether or not he

approves of the group that has been chosen for him. He recognizes that he is at the head of the group, but not the sole representative. He sees that everyone on his committee does some share of the work, and he is careful not to present a report to the general assembly unless it has been approved earlier at a committee meeting by at least a majority of his committee. In every way that he can, he shows consideration for the opinions of his committee members.

Only by working together as a unit can the members of a committee prove helpful to the organization that is depending on them.

**Other rights of members.** When a member wishes to address the group, he stands up and "addresses the chair," as it is called, by saying, "Mr. Chairman" (or "Madam Chairman").

The chairman recognizes him with a nod or, at meetings where parliamentary procedure is strictly followed, he responds by speaking the member's last name, preceded by Mr., Mrs., or Miss: "Mr. Smith," "Mrs. Green," or "Miss Brown."

At meetings of large groups, such as employees' clubs, it is not possible for a chairman to know everyone's name well enough to respond instantly. At business clubs, too, new members may not be well known to the chairman. In such cases, it is proper for the member to identify himself by adding his name, after addressing the chair: "Mr. Chairman, John Smith" or "Mr. Chairman, Mary Smith." At business clubs, it is customary to include also the name of one's firm: "Mr. Chairman, John Smith, National Bank."

When a member fails to identify himself the chairman asks, "Your name, please?" If two or more members happen to stand up and address the chair at the same time, the chairman gives recognition to the person whose voice he heard first. It is left to the second person to speak up again later

in the meeting; the chairman is not expected to remember and to single him out.

Whenever it seems to the chairman that two persons have stood up and spoken at exactly the same moment, he shows fairness by granting the privilege of speaking with the following order in mind: (*a*) to the maker of a motion under discussion, or (*b*) to a member who has not yet spoken on the motion, or (*c*) to a member who seldom seeks the privilege of speaking.

It is permissible for a member to call out at any time, "Mr. Chairman, we cannot hear the speaker." This is a necessary interruption, not considered discourteous, for it is the privilege of the group to hear the speaking comfortably.

Sometimes a member would like to have a certain report, or parts of it, read over again; or he may wish to see for himself some papers that have been discussed and placed in the custody of the chairman or one of the other officers. In this case, the member addresses the chair and is recognized, and then he states his request.

At a large meeting, or at one where parliamentary procedure is strictly followed, the chairman says to the assembly, "The request has been made by a member that page 2 of the treasurer's report be read again. Does anyone wish to make a motion?" Or he may say, "A member has requested permission to borrow the treasurer's report, so that he may read it himself. Does anyone wish to make a motion?"

The member who has made the request does not make the motion or second it; that is left to any two other members. If no one comes to his aid and helps with the motion, it is apparent that he would have lost out in the voting, anyway, when not even two members are in favor.

At meetings conducted with less formality, the member still makes his request aloud, but the chairman takes the



responsibility of deciding whether or not to grant it. Seldom is a member refused. A chairman, however, will usually say, as he hands the papers to the member, "Will you please return these as soon as the meeting is adjourned?" or "Please see that the clerk receives these as soon as you have looked at them."

Not all members know that they have a legal weapon with which to outwit in a polite, quiet way the smart aleck who thrusts in his "motion to adjourn" whenever things are not going his way. Immediately after the chairman has brought the meeting to order, someone should "make a motion that the meeting today adjourn at such-and-such a time." One of his friends will be alert to second the motion. Unless the hour mentioned is an unreasonable one, there is little cause for discussion, and the chairman puts the motion to a vote. With the majority anxious to see matters through without interruption, they will carry the vote, and the minority dissenter has no chance to disrupt the proceedings whenever he feels like it.

When a member thinks that a meeting is not proceeding in good parliamentary fashion, he may rise and say, "Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order."

The chairman answers, "State your point of order."

The member explains: "My point of order is that such-and-such rule has been violated." A member sometimes needs to go to some length, or he may have to quote from the bylaws or refer to previous minutes, for he must be ready to prove his case. After the member has been heard completely, without interruption, the chairman must make a decision.

An appeal from his decision may be made by any two members, as follows: One of them says, "I appeal the decision of the chair." The chairman asks for grounds on which the

appeal is made. The member states his grounds and, when he has finished, a second member says, "I second the appeal."

The appeal is then open to debate and voting. The majority wins, while a tie vote sustains the chair's decision.

The foregoing general view of procedure in an assembly has been included more as a matter of information than as an example of general practice. When a member has made a mistake through apparent unfamiliarity with the rules, it is not considered necessary for anyone to make a correction, unless the privileges of others are injured. It is good to know what to do, but it would be in questionable taste to try to show off that knowledge. The fundamental rules of parliamentary procedure are more kindly intentioned. They are

1. One thing at a time
2. The rule of the majority
3. The rights of the minority
4. Justice and courtesy to all

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the first thing that a person should consider before calling a meeting?
2. If a meeting is to be held in your office, what preparations should you make out of consideration toward the people who are coming?
3. What is the most comfortable seating arrangement for a group of about 10 people? For a large group?
4. How can the problem of ventilation be controlled during a meeting, so that everyone will be comfortable?
5. Describe the secretary's role at a meeting.
6. When luncheon is to be served in a meeting room, what preparations is a secretary expected to make? Can she help in the serving?
7. What equipment and food are needed when tea is served after a meeting?

8. What is the general procedure for supervising the attendance at a large stockholders' meeting?

9. In what ways can the leader of an informal meeting show consideration toward everyone and at the same time keep the meeting progressing smoothly and without waste of time?

10. In what ways are the participants at a meeting expected to cooperate?

11. If you should have the opportunity to attend a training class conducted by the firm for which you work, what courtesies would be expected of you? ————

12. Your employer is unable to attend the annual dinner of a business club to which he belongs, and he has asked you to go in his place. Assume that this is the first time you have gone, and you know none of those present. Name at least five rules of social behavior that you would observe.

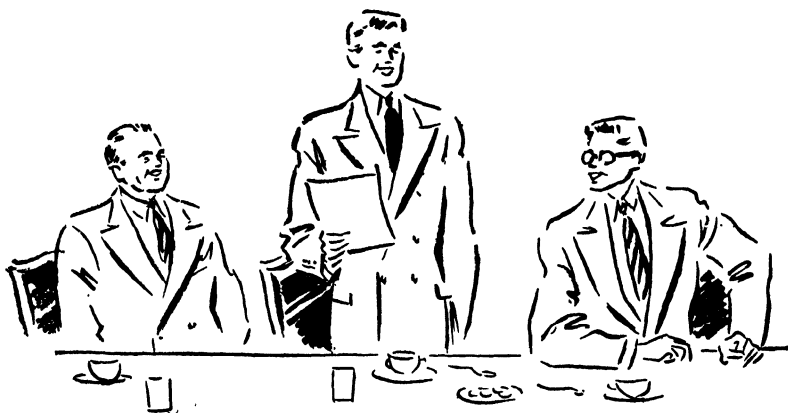
13. Is it usually possible to observe strictly all rules of parliamentary procedure in conducting meetings? Why or why not?

14. What are the fundamental rules of parliamentary procedure?

15. At the direction of your instructor, inquire of various local clubs, to see whether you can attend a business meeting as a spectator. If a club holds a luncheon or a dinner before its meeting, there will be no charge to those allowed to attend later for the meeting. Organizations that might be able to accommodate are those such as the Chamber of Commerce, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Professional and Business Women's Club, and the Parent-Teachers Association. Depending on the size of your community, there may be others.

16. A group may choose three topics of current interest and hold a meeting to discuss and vote on them. These topics may pertain to matters within your school or your firm, or to problems of government in your city or town, or to current events—any set of related topics that will afford everyone in the group a chance to participate. Officers may be chosen by drawing names. Rules of parliamentary procedure are to be followed.

17. Draw names for a group numbering five or six members. These people are to conduct an informal meeting in the presence of the rest of the group, just as if they were in a private office to discuss a business matter. For choice of a subject, you might refer to such publications as *Business Week*, *American Business*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*; trade magazines; and the business sections of large city newspapers.



## 19. THE ETIQUETTE OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Success in public speaking is one of the surest means of securing quick recognition for young men and young women in business. They gain publicity for themselves and for their firms; they meet people; and they build up their poise, as well as their vocabularies.

Until a person has occasion to speak before the public he may not realize how many problems of etiquette are likely to arise. There is more to making a speech than talking, and anyone who has served as chairman just once remembers the many questions that flocked through his mind as he prepared for the job.

### THE CHAIRMAN

**Preparing the location.** If you are chairman, your work will start long before you rise to make a neat little speech of introduction. It will start as soon as the hall or the dining room has been rented.

Unless you are familiar with the seating arrangements, you will need to check to see whether light might pour in from a window behind the speaker. That is one of the most reli-

able means of putting an audience to sleep quickly. At the same time inquire about air conditioning or note the arrangement of the windows and doors. There have been occasions when people had to walk out in the midst of an interesting talk because, good manners or not, they could no longer endure the stuffiness of the room.

If a platform is to be used, arrangements should be made in advance to have it furnished with a stand or a table. In case a speaker is going to refer to a script, it is best to have a surface large enough to hold two stacks of 8½- by 11-inch paper. Then each page can be laid to one side as soon as it has been read.

When motion pictures or slides are to be used, the arrangement of the room will need to be planned carefully. There should be an electric outlet for the projector, space in which to set up a screen, and curtains or paper over the windows to make the room reasonably dark. It is far from desirable to keep an audience fidgeting around while lights are being tested and pictures are coming out upside down.

**Making head-table arrangements.** When a luncheon or a dinner is to precede a talk, you will be expected to supervise the seating arrangements at the head table. The center chair is occupied by the president, who presides as chairman. He may be the president of the business club or the president of the employees' club or the president of the firm sponsoring the affair. Generally the president of a club acts as chairman at all meetings during the term that he is in office. When it is impossible for him to attend, his place is taken by the vice-president or, in the absence of both, by the secretary or the treasurer, in that order.

The speaker is placed at the chairman's right. When there are two speakers, one will sit at either side of the chairman, with the principal (or main) speaker at his right. A third

speaker, if there were one, would be next to the first speaker, and a fourth speaker next to the second speaker.

Exceptions occasionally have to be made when distinguished guests have been invited. For instance, if a certain guest is better known than the second speaker, he is seated at the chairman's immediate left. The place of the main speaker, however, is always at the chairman's immediate right.

For seating many guests of honor, several points must be kept in mind. Their distance from the center of the table is judged in some measure by their relative importance; they are placed as far as possible next to congenial companions; and no two women are seated side by side when there are enough men to alternate with the women.

When there is a toastmaster, he sits at the right of the chairman and the main speaker sits at the right of the toastmaster. The placement of the others will continue, on the left and the right, with president and toastmaster as one unit. Sometimes, instead of a chairman and a toastmaster, there will be a president and a chairman, and they will be regarded as one unit.

At a business-club luncheon there is frequently only one speaker and there are no invited guests. In that case, the chairman's left is occupied by another club officer, generally the secretary. The rest of the places are occupied by club officers—by the principal ones if the list is lengthy, by all officers and even committee chairmen if it is the table that is long. Whenever possible, those who will give reports, make announcements, or in any way find it necessary to speak, should be at the head table, where they can be seen and heard most clearly.

At a dinner sponsored by a firm, one speaker and the president would look decidedly lonesome at a long head table

all by themselves. Both for filling in the spaces and as a mark of recognition, executives or senior employees are invited to sit at the head table. If there are several speakers but no invited guests, or one speaker and several invited guests—but in either case, a small number at the head table—two members of the firm may still be required to sit at either end of the table and balance the seating arrangement. Some chairmen, with thoughtfulness toward the invited guests, make it a point to have the end seats always filled by people within the organization; then no one will have an “end-of-the-list” feeling all through the proceedings because he is at the very end of a long table in strange company.

Sometimes there are no speakers for any of several reasons: (1) Because of some serious obstacle the invited speaker may not have been able to come and no substitute could be secured on short notice. All the places are simply moved up one, so as to leave no gap. (2) It may have been decided at the beginning of the year to keep certain dates for open forums, for the showing of technical films, and for other events. If a club member has been appointed to conduct the forum, or if someone—whether a member or not—has spent time and effort in putting on the films, it is considered courteous to place him at the right of the chairman.

When the seating plan that seems most suitable has been decided on, a place card is made out for each person who will be at the head table. These cards are numbered 1, 2, and so on, starting at the extreme left facing the audience. In the reception room, as is explained later in this chapter under the heading, “Invited Guests,” each guest is given a duplicate identity card and is told, “It corresponds with your place, starting from the left.” Ladies who are invited to be head-table guests are given modest corsages, usually consisting of a single gardenia, each. White will not be discordant



with the color of any costume, and the perfume of one flower is not offensively heavy.

When a lady is to speak, or when she is the sole guest of honor, her role calls for a more elaborate corsage. The chairman's secretary or some member of the committee checks with her a day ahead, to find out what colors she plans to wear and whether she has certain preferences in flowers. If the lady has a business or home address in the city, her corsage should be delivered there by the florist, an hour or two ahead of time. In cases when delivery seems at all uncertain, it has been found best for either the chairman or a committee member to give the flowers to the lady personally on her arrival.

When a head-table group is large enough to meet in a reception room, someone on a committee generally picks up the individual corsage boxes at the florist's and holds them in the reception room. As each lady arrives, she is given the box marked with her name.

When the ladies are few in number, they may be given their boxes upon entering the building.

*Engaging a speaker.* If you engage a speaker through a lecture bureau, you will pay the bureau and not the individual personally. Generally a bureau will require payment a stated number of days in advance. If it does, this business arrangement should not be overlooked or you may be faced with the embarrassment of being without a speaker. If circumstances that he could not foresee force him to cancel an engagement after you have made the payment, the money will be refunded.

When arrangements have been made directly with the speaker, and not through a bureau or an agent, it is customary to pay him personally, either as soon as you have greeted him at the door or when he is about to leave. Pay-

ment is not made in the dining room, nor is a speaker met with apologies and a promise that a check will go in the mail. You may give him either a check folded once or money in an unsealed envelope. In making a transaction of this kind which has a social flavor, it is thoughtful when cash is given to have it changed previously at a bank into bills that are fresh and of the highest denominations for making the total. When you are paying a fee of \$200, for instance, your envelope will be flat and neat with a one hundred-dollar bill and two fifties, instead of being stuffed with fives and tens and a mound of ones.

Sometimes a speaker will be engaged without charge. If he is from out of town he is told that he will be reimbursed for his expenses as soon as he sends in his account. When he arrives, you will thank him warmly for coming. When he has finished speaking, you will make a gracious comment or two; and if his talk has stimulated particular interest, it will be natural for you to make several spontaneous remarks of a complimentary nature.

It will also be courteous to write a letter of appreciation the very next morning. In it you might use such phrases as "I'm anxious to let you know how much your talk was enjoyed," "So many people commented afterwards," "We all appreciate your kindness in coming." The tone would, of course, be extremely cordial. With ticket returns in, you may find that a few dollars can be spared for an appropriate gift. If so, mention in your letter that a remembrance "from the club" or "from the firm" is on the way.

*Arranging a program.* When there are to be several speakers, the main speaker is placed last on the program. At a business convention, the same practice applies; there will be speakers at various sessions for several days, but the most important speaker will be presented at the final dinner.

The 5-hour program, consisting of a quartet, a cheerleader, dinner, vaudeville acts, and 10 speakers, may still be cherished at some political gatherings, but it has become outmoded in business circles. At a formal dinner, a little music is welcome, including, perhaps, a good soloist; but it is considered better to omit entertainment if it cannot be of high quality. Since the chairman is responsible for the arrangement of a program, he is the one who will be blamed by the audience if the soprano sings flat.

**Regulating the time.** At a business luncheon, three-quarters of an hour is generally needed for serving the meal. Another three-quarters of an hour is considered long enough for the remainder of the program, including announcements of general interest; the presentation of head-table guests, if any; and the speaking. Once a time schedule has been established, the members are within their rights to protest whenever it is not kept.

At the most successful noonday meetings, the main speech does not last longer than 30 minutes. When there are several speakers, 30 minutes is generally divided, so that two speakers talk for 15 minutes, each, or three speakers for 10 minutes, each.

Quite generally, when business clubs meet in the evening, 1 hour is reserved for serving dinner and from 30 to 45 minutes for the business meeting, if one is held. About 40 minutes is given to the speaker, and 10 minutes to a question-and-answer period.

At business conventions, the talks may run a little longer than usual when the speakers that have been secured are authorities on specialized subjects. Presumably they will present new ideas and facts and, in order to explain them properly, will need time to give illustrations and cite case histories.

As chairman, your opening remarks will require from 2 to 3 minutes; and 4 to 5 minutes, besides, may be spent on the introduction of head-table guests, if there are fewer than a half dozen. Sometimes the prominence of the speaker and the subject of his talk have been made the occasion for inviting as many as 20 guests to sit at the head table, in which case, your introductions will probably extend to 8 minutes. From 1 to 3 minutes is the time ordinarily spent on an introduction for each speaker, but there is no rule. Many excellent introductions have not taken over a half minute, apiece, while many another, just as admirable, has been given a little more than 3 minutes, when a chairman who was especially clever at ad-libbing had found it necessary to stretch out a program a bit because some speaker had failed to appear. Closing remarks are limited to one or two sentences.

When a program is elaborate, with a witty toastmaster, honored guests to be presented, music, and other entertainment, the chairman will win everybody's heart if he permits no encores, keeps the speakers rigidly to their time, and limits his introductions to the barest minimum. Sometimes a chairman is so delighted with the entertainment that he has arranged, he is tempted to spread the program out a bit. Nevertheless, if he really wants to have it received with enthusiasm, he will take a cue from experienced actors. They know that the time to quit is not after the audience has had enough, but while they are clamoring for more.

My mother tells about an amateur play that was given when she was a little girl in Maine. It ran for the usual time, about 3 hours, and at the end all the loyal villagers clapped loud and long. As they started to pull on their scarves and mittens to go home, they saw the curtain slowly rising. The cast had decided that such applause deserved an encore, so they hoisted the curtain and gave the whole play over again.

It rests with the chairman to suggest tactfully to the speaker what the time limit will be. This is done when the speaker is engaged. The chairman may write or say, "Our speakers usually talk for half an hour. Do you think that your speech will fit into that time?" Or he may have to say, "Each of the speakers will talk for 10 minutes. Will that be satisfactory?"

At an affair within an organization—perhaps an employees' club meeting or a small committee luncheon—the chairman might keep the impromptu speakers within bounds by wording his introduction somewhat as follows: "Now Bob Brown will spend a minute telling you about . . ." or "We have one minute left, so I'm going to ask Bob Brown if he'll give us a short summary of his investigation so far." Bob will probably talk for 5 minutes, but that won't be as bad as his usual half hour.

You will be expected to warn a speaker when his time is almost over. One way of doing this is to have a small red light placed facing him and away from the audience; you would give a 2-minute warning by pressing the button at the end of the cord connected with the light. Another way is to place before the speaker a slip of paper on which you have written, "Two minutes." Whenever, in spite of this, a speaker runs over his time, a chairman usually gives him another minute or two and then reminds him again with a slight cough.

Sometimes your problem will be that of a program's running unexpectedly short. A speaker may talk for only 20 minutes instead of the half hour allotted to him. If his talk is good and the program seems satisfying, you may let it go at that, probably spending a minute or so longer on your own conclusion than you would have done ordinarily.

In some cases, you might be prepared for a curtailed program. One of the speakers is unable to come, or a speaker

tells you ahead of time that his speech will run short, or you may hear from others that a certain speaker never fills out his time. If so, you might write out appropriate questions, place them confidentially with several friends in the audience before the meeting starts, and then ask your main speaker, in private, if he is willing to have you conduct a question-and-answer period when he has finished.

**When a toastmaster is engaged.** Sometimes at a luncheon or a dinner, the chairman extends his duties to include those of toastmaster. On other occasions, he and his committee prefer that the toastmaster should be an officer or some employee of their firm, or a member of their business club. At a formal dinner, he might be a professional entertainer or a person widely recognized for his sparkling personality. The chairman's introduction, then, will be brief, containing hardly more than some such announcement as "In charge of the program this evening is a man you all know well. May I present our toastmaster, Mr. Frank White."

Mr. White ordinarily gives an opening speech of 2 or 3 minutes; or if he has been engaged as a humorist, he might use as much as 10 minutes. The professional entertainer is not likely to be acquainted with members of the audience, so he will doubtless ask you before the dinner starts to give him names of some of the people on whom he can pin his jokes. Who is very tall and thin? Who has to commute the greatest distance to work? What is the hobby of the "big boss"?

You can help the toastmaster further by giving him a seating plan of the head table. Not infrequently, someone will rise and make an introduction, announce the name, and look to the left. The audience looks in the same direction, and then the speaker rises from the right. At one dinner where there were four speakers, the toastmaster made this mistake

each time but the last. It was hardly complimentary to the speakers, and the toastmaster was genuinely embarrassed.

**Helping the speaker.** During a luncheon or a dinner, or in a short chat before a platform program starts, you can help an outside speaker by describing his audience to him. You might give him a few facts about your organization, the business in which it is engaged, the products it manufactures, the types of jobs filled by its employees. If the speaker is making his appearance before a business club, you might tell him something about the purpose of the club and the occupations and interests of the members. By providing conversation, you not only relieve possible awkwardness when two strangers must become immediately acquainted, but you enable the visitor to make his illustrations more appropriate to the audience. A speaker is always grateful for whatever information he receives that will help him make his talk more effective.

Without realizing it, a chairman has sometimes directly caused a speaker's failure. We have all seen a chairman who was so conscious of presiding that he had to hold the center of the stage every minute. While the speaker was talking, this chairman would be seen signaling to his committee aides about the room, reading notes in deep absorption, and carrying on intense whispered conversations with others at the table.

The behavior of an audience is to a considerable extent governed by the example of the chairman. If he doesn't seem interested, they may be indifferent, too. When he listens attentively, applauds, and laughs with appreciation, he sets an example of courtesy that is likely to be followed throughout the room.

**Making introductions.** As chairman, you stand whenever you are speaking. When you introduce head-table guests, you re-

main standing while they acknowledge the introductions; when you conduct a question-and-answer period, you remain standing with the speaker; but at all other times you sit down when anyone else is speaking.

Ordinarily you do not preface your opening remarks with a salutation of any kind; but on an occasion when the main speaker and the honored guests were unusually prominent, your first words might include them: "Governor Jones, distinguished guests, employees, and friends of the —— Company."

In your opening remarks you sound the keynote of the occasion. The group may be gathered together to try to learn how to promote better customer relations, or how to train their employees more effectively, or how to decorate their store counters. With so many facets to the problem of business management, the list could go on and on. An audience not only likes an occasion tied up in a neat package, but a speaker will often make a more telling contribution after the chairman has tactfully started things moving in a definite direction.

Your introduction of the head-table guests may be opened by compliments paid to them as a group. In this way you can let an audience of dress manufacturers know that its guests are executives from the leading women's shops. An audience of insurance salesmen similarly learns that it is honoring the men and women who have rolled up the highest total of sales for the year.

After this group identification, you introduce each guest individually, starting from the end of the table on your left. These introductions are brief, covering hardly more than a person's title, the name of his firm, and his own name: "President of the Brown Company, Mr. James Johnson." (A pause while Mr. Johnson rises, smiles and bows slightly.) Then



"President of the Williams Company, Miss Mary Jones," and so on.

When the list of guests is long, a chairman may feel that he would be able to save time by asking the audience not to applaud until all the introductions have been made. However, it rarely takes longer for an audience to show its appreciation at each introduction than it does for the guest to rise and be seated, so actually no time is wasted. People who have been guests will tell you, too, that they feel their presence has more meaning when they are given individual recognition.

Now the time has come to introduce the speaker. This starts with a welcome somewhat as follows: "Having heard Mr. Smith on other occasions, I know how fortunate we are to have him with us today," or "From the intense interest shown in his new pay-roll plan, it is evident that our speaker hardly needs an introduction," or "With all of us so deeply concerned with the problems raised by the new act of Congress, it is most timely and fortunate that we have today as speaker a lady noted for her experience in the field of business administration."

After an opening sentence, the speaker's accomplishments are mentioned. If they are many, not all can be listed, but by picking out the latest or most pertinent facts you can be sure of having identified the speaker sufficiently so that his talk will carry weight. Then, with easy phrasing, you quickly come to the point: "Our guest has chosen for the subject of his talk this afternoon 'Such-and-such.' May I present (slight pause) Mr. Smith." The wording can be varied in many ways, of course. For instance, you may say, "Because of Mr. Smith's remarkable background, our committee was indeed happy when he chose for his subject 'Such-and-such.' (Slight pause) Mr. Smith." Or you may mention Mr. Smith's long experi-

ence in the field about which he will speak, or the fact that he has recently conducted new tests, which will form the basis of his talk.

You would not say to a group, "I give you Mr. Smith," any more than you would "give" him in a single introduction. Care must be taken not to give away any of the speech that is forthcoming. You have heard the chairman who says, "Our speaker will show you that such-and-such and such-and-such, and you will be surprised to learn that such-and-such . . ." The poor speaker feels very dejected indeed as he hears his whole talk summarized.

Since an introduction must not take much time, it must be kept compact, yet meaningful. Even the seasoned businessman finds it helpful to write out his words, edit them carefully, and memorize them. The halting, fumbling introduction, during which the chairman mispronounces the name, twists the subject title, and gives inaccurate information about the speaker's background, makes the hearers feel that they might almost as well have stayed away. Imagine how it makes the speaker feel.

As chairman, you may be surprised when a speaker will ask you not to make an introduction for him. You know that introductions are customary, but what you probably won't know is that the speaker has an agonizing memory of the embarrassment he has gone through in his experience with other chairmen.

He will never forget the night he was introduced with such fulsome flattery that he felt that everyone in the room wanted to snicker.

Topping this, even, is his remembrance of the dinner at which the chairman said, "I know you all wanted to hear Mr. Jones, but his price was too high so we have Mr. Smith instead."

As one of several speakers at a big convention, he experienced no pleasure in having the chairman single him out with an exultant, "And now! We have saved our best for the last."

You can help put this speaker at ease by showing him the paper on which your introduction is typed and remarking, "Well, this is what I had planned to say." If he finds that your introduction is accurate, pleasing, and not overlong, he will in all probability consent to your giving it. He knows that a good introduction will serve the dual purpose of putting his audience in a receptive mood and of giving him confidence in making his talk. However, if he is adamant about wanting no introduction made, all you can do is to announce his name and his subject without further comment.

As soon as you have introduced a speaker, turn toward him and wait until he stands up before you sit down. On a platform, turn toward the speaker, but without turning your back completely on the audience; smile, and wait until he has come to the front of the platform. Without crossing in front of him, take your seat.

At a luncheon or a dinner, a speaker is never introduced between courses. However, when no meeting is to precede the lecture, a chairman sometimes uses the few minutes while dishes are being removed to make necessary business announcements.

Sometimes an occasion arises that makes it necessary to change the order of a program after it has been printed. As you take up the matter with the speakers whose position on the program will have to be changed, explain the reason for the move and make sure that it is agreeable to them. When you reach that part of the program which has been changed,

give the audience a reason and, at the same time, publicly thank those who agreed to the rearrangement.

**When the speaker has finished.** Sometimes a chairman prefers to stand as soon as a speaker has finished and been seated. Others feel that to do so may curtail some of the applause for the speaker. Once the program has started, it is well to have someone at all times standing at the head table, but as chairman you can show thoughtfulness if, on arising, you look at the speaker and join the audience in applauding.

When the applause is over, you compliment the speaker. One sentence, spoken with sincerity, is all that is needed. In a second sentence you thank him. If he is the only speaker, the occasion comes to an end without further word from you, and the audience starts to stand up and leave. If you are on a platform, you walk beside the speaker to the door; at a head table the people might mingle together for a moment or two and then walk out in small groups.

If more speakers are to follow, you make your two closing sentences concerning the one who has spoken just the same, and immediately go into your introduction for the next speaker. The adept chairman sees that such an introduction follows without a noticeable break. The transition may be made in some such way as this:

"After such hearty applause, Mr. Smith, I hardly need to tell you that our group enthusiastically endorses your views. On behalf of the —— Company I thank you for giving us such an informative talk on the importing of gloves.

"With our interest in import/export problems so stimulated, we are very fortunate to have as second speaker today a representative of the United States customs service ——"

*Conducting a question-and-answer period.* With the advent of radio nearly 30 years ago, the professional public speakers were naturally fearful that the comforts of easy-chair listen-

ing would bite into the attendance of their physical audiences. Before they had a chance to find out, someone—no one seems to know exactly who—hit on the idea of holding a question-and-answer period.

The idea caught the popular fancy like a choice bit of new slang, and not only did people continue to go out in every kind of weather, but many of them went solely to see whether they could nettle the speaker.

The question-and-answer period is still popular, but at business lectures the questions are prompted by an honest desire to learn more from the speaker, and not by an attempt to get laughs.

Ten minutes is the length of time usually given to this feature. To make sure that the speaker is willing to participate, the matter is mentioned to him at the time you carry on negotiations for his engagement. "It is our custom to hold a short question-and-answer period before we adjourn at 2 o'clock. Is this agreeable to you?" This assures him that you will definitely conclude the program at a certain time and that he will not be held up in his private business affairs, that afternoon. For an evening affair, it is also well to mention the time, so that your speaker won't be concerned about making late travel connections.

When you find a program running short, and no question-and-answer period has been planned, you may feel that by the addition of this feature the occasion will be lengthened and brightened. As soon as the speaker has finished, you might whisper to him, under cover of the applause, "We have about 10 minutes left. Would you consent to having a question period?" By making your request in such a way as to be unnoticed by the audience, you will save both the speaker and yourself possible embarrassment if he feels it necessary to decline.

When he gives his consent to go ahead, make your complimentary remark as usual and then announce, "Since we have a few minutes left, Mr. Smith has graciously consented to answer questions from the audience." Your closing sentence of thanks is saved until the end of the period.

When someone in the audience wants to ask a question, he stands and says, "Mr. Chairman," or "Madam Chairman." You look in his direction and say, "Yes?" or, "Yes, sir," or simply smile in acknowledgment, and he asks his question. Even if a person's voice is clear and seems to carry well, take no chances, but always repeat a question for the benefit of all. The speaker will be glad, too, of the extra few seconds in which to gather his thoughts for the answer.

When questions do not come readily from the audience, you will have to try to think of something to ask. You might have to do this only at the beginning, for most question periods gather momentum, once they have started, and need no further push.

Usually the difficulty is in seeing that everyone gets a chance to ask what is on his mind. A chairman has to be careful not to play favorites by asking only the people that he knows and neglecting others in the audience. If so many people wish to be heard that there obviously won't be time for everyone, say, "I'm afraid we'll have to limit the questioning. We've already had two questions from this side of the room, so let's have the next two from the other side." When they have been asked, say, "Perhaps someone in the center of the floor has a question," or "Let's have the last two questions from the balcony."

#### INVITED GUESTS

These guests are invited as a compliment to the speaker—an indication that his talk is expected to be of enough value

to attract a special group, who are glad to be present on his account. The guests may be executives of firms in the same line of business that the speaker is engaged in, or men and women in allied lines, or people of prominence in the community. The invited guests—or “honored guests” or “special guests,” as they are also termed—are not called upon to speak. They sit at the head table, the chairman introduces them to the audience, and that is all.

The chairman generally asks the speaker, in advance, if he has special friends or business associates whom he would like to have invited. Other names suggest themselves because of the subject of the talk, and the chairman usually has no difficulty in thinking of business clubs and firms that could be represented appropriately.

Invited guests may number three or four at a luncheon, but it is not an unusual occurrence for a head table at a formal dinner to have as many as two dozen guests. It's like making up any social list. Either you invite a few close friends and stop there, or you find your list growing to include everybody. When there is one “guest of honor,” this person is often better known than the speaker; in fact, he may be of such prominence as to form the main attraction. The practice of having one such guest is not prevalent in business, although it is at present the general procedure at women's clubs.

When the chairman is acquainted with a person who is to be invited, he generally telephones to extend the invitation. Upon the guest's acceptance, the chairman writes a confirming letter, repeating the time and place. The secretary who opens the letter will then be sure to note the engagement on the reminder pads.

When the chairman has not met the person whom he is inviting, he writes him a letter on his own business stationery.

If the guest's name was suggested by the speaker, the chairman mentions that fact, for it lends weight to an invitation.

Sometimes a person who receives such an invitation will not be able to commit himself very far in advance. He should answer that he appreciates the invitation and hopes to be able to go, but his work (or his health, or his uncertain traveling plans) prevent him from accepting invitations too far in advance. However, he closes with the assurance that he will telephone to the chairman several days ahead of time and give him a definite answer. If the chairman does not hear from him again, he should telephone to him the day before the occasion, phrasing his reminder in a friendly tone so that there will be no hint of reproach concerning the neglected answer. One way of managing it would be to say, "I'm just making up our head-table arrangements, and I hope it's going to be possible for you to join us tomorrow."

If, when the date is near, there is any invited guest from whom no reply at all has been received, the chairman telephones, saying, "I was getting ready to make the seating arrangements for the head table and I wondered if we were going to have the pleasure of your company at the luncheon on Thursday. Mr. Smith is speaking on ——"

To provide for the proper reception of the invited guests a small room near the dining room should be reserved. Usually a large gathering is profitable enough for a hotel so that the management will make no charge for this extra accommodation. At the time that the head-table guests are invited, they are asked to arrive 15 minutes before the hour set for the meal, at the Florentine Room, or whatever the name may be by which the hotel designates the reception room. When final speaking arrangements have been made the speakers also should be invited to come to the reception room.



A list of all head-table guests is prepared in advance and distributed to the members of the reception committee. These members, who are on duty near the main door as invited guests arrive, see that the newcomers are directed to the reception room. As the guests enter, the chairman should be alert to greet them and introduce them to the speaker or speakers and to other guests standing near.

When the seating arrangements have been determined a day or two before the affair, two sets of place cards are made out for all those at the head table. Each set is composed of cards on which are written the names of the persons and their positions at the head table, starting with number 1 at the extreme left facing the audience. One set would be used as place cards for the table, while in the reception room each guest would be handed his duplicate card by the chairman or by a committee member and told, "The number corresponds to your place, starting from the left."

It would be discourteous of the chairman to keep looking at his watch every few minutes, so he delegates someone on the committee to remind him when it is exactly time for the meal to begin. The chairman and the speaker, followed by the others in the reception room, go to the dining room together and find their places at the head table.

If there is an orchestra, the leader should have been given his cue when to break into a lively number, with an appropriate title. When the occasion is on a rather grand scale, with a speaker of prominence and guests all dressed in their evening best, the audience enjoys having the affair start with a little flourish.

The same kind of care that a chairman exercises in making any introduction is needed for pronouncing each guest's name correctly and clearly and in having the description of him accurate and suitable.

One business executive who has presided at many functions says that he carries small cards, on which he has had typed the information that he intends to use. As he meets the people in the reception room, he unhesitatingly asks each one, "Would you mind if I checked with you to be sure my notes are correct? Now, you're treasurer of the —— Company? Is that correct?" At the same time, he checks on pronunciations and finds out whether his women guests are Miss or Mrs.

He says that with all the checking he and his secretary do in advance, at least one change has had to be made on nearly every occasion, to bring his notes up to the minute.

Each guest stands and bows slightly to the audience as he is presented. The people appreciate being given a friendly smile, too. One always rises on being introduced this way, a woman as well as a man. Sometimes even one who is physically handicapped will make an effort to rise, however slightly, from his chair, in acknowledgment of an introduction.

#### THE SPEAKER

**His obligations.** Once a speaker has accepted an engagement, he is under obligation to keep it. There are some who make a practice of accepting every engagement offered to them—even going out of their way to seek dates—but who fail to live up to the obligation. They think that the advertising will be profitable and count upon excusing themselves at the last minute on the pretense of "a business matter that has come up suddenly" or "illness" or "a necessary business trip out of town."

They seem to overlook the fact that the audience is composed of business people who have heard all those old excuses before and who know how insincere they sound. As a result, the advertising that the speaker may have received is likely

to do him more harm than good, when the members of an audience feel that they have been treated unscrupulously and discourteously. When a speaker honestly cannot keep an engagement, he should ask the chairman if he may be allowed to appear at another time. This is his sole evidence of good will.

Together with the necessity of keeping an engagement, there is the obligation of arriving on time. Experienced speakers make it a habit to try to arrive 15 minutes early. Most of this extra time may be taken up by some last-minute delay or by slowing up caused by traffic congestion; but when the speaker actually does arrive early, he is ready to make use of the opportunity to get adjusted to his surroundings and to have a few pleasant words with the chairman.

**Appearance.** As the attention of an audience is sure to be focused on the speaker, he cannot afford to neglect his appearance in the smallest detail. It detracts from the authority of a man if he needs a haircut or if his suit is unpressed. On a platform, too, nothing is more noticeable than shoes in need of a shine. In the case of a woman, the outstanding defect is to have a slip showing.

*Dress.* In the daytime, a man wears a business suit and a woman wears a street-length costume with a hat. After 6 o'clock the type of dress varies.

When people come directly from work—at about 6 o'clock—to a business meeting or a dinner, everyone ordinarily wears daytime clothes. This includes the chairman, the speaker, and others who sit at the head table.

When the starting time is later, a woman speaker usually wears a dinner gown and a man wears a tuxedo. Members of the audience seldom change from daytime clothes; but the chairman, invited guests, and club officers will do so.

At a formal dinner, everyone, audience included, wears a dinner gown or a tuxedo. For some affairs the tickets and invitations carry the designation "Tails." This means white tie and tails for the men and evening gowns for the ladies.

The foregoing practices are not to be interpreted as rules, do or die. Anyone who comes directly from work or who has had a hard day of traveling does not always have the time or the opportunity to change. Besides, in some lines of work, as well as in some communities, it would be considered pretentious to wear a tuxedo. Men and women experienced in public speaking never leave their appearance to guesswork. They or their secretaries communicate with the chairman in advance and ask what is to be worn.

A dinner dress for a woman speaker means one with a long skirt and covered shoulders. The skirt would fall straight, or draped if it is the fashion, but not in the full, bouffant style of a ball gown. If gloves are worn, they are removed entirely at the table, not left with the hands tucked under at the wrist. On a platform, no gloves are worn.

In an effort to make an effective appearance, a woman may think of wearing bright red or a big splash of sequins. Actually, a red figure is trying on the eyes, and the audience will find it easier to look away. A few sequins are decorative, but beads and softer trimmings are not so likely to catch the light like an automobile radiator on a sunny day.

Ladies love flowers, but a committee's choice often would be better advised if someone had thought to ask the speaker beforehand about her preferences. The recipient isn't altogether happy with red roses against her new coral gown or with a row of gardenias whose scent gives her a headache. Nevertheless, she is expected to wear her floral gift. Fortunately there are so many ways of wearing flowers that she has a choice.

She may pin the heavily scented flowers at her waistline instead of at her shoulder.

At a dinner, she may pin the red roses on a neutral and filmy evening scarf—white or gold or sand. During the meal, she might keep the scarf over her shoulders, and then lay it lightly over the back of her chair just before rising to speak. For a platform appearance, an evening jacket or cape would be better than a scarf, since she would keep it over her shoulders until she stood up to speak.

When the corsage consists of a single flower, such as an orchid, she can remove the ribbon and wear the flower in her hair.

**Voice.** Politeness in public speaking requires, first of all, that a voice shall be heard easily by the audience. However fine the qualities of expression, they will be lost entirely on the people in the rear seats if they can hear only one word out of five.

*Without aid from a loud-speaker.* If you are required to speak in a room without a loud-speaker system, aim your voice slightly above the heads of the audience, toward the back of the room. This will give your tones broader range and everyone will be able to hear you, while if you should talk into a group your voice would be buried there. It is possible to turn your head from side to side and to look up at the balcony, while still sending your voice toward the back of the room. Until you have had experience, it may be wise to practice at home before a mirror.

*Before a microphone.* When the room is equipped with a loud-speaker system, it will be easy on your vocal chords but hard on your patience. You will be tempted to move your head or to take a step to one side; but if you do, your voice will be heard only by those sitting near. Keep in mind the person who slipped into a seat in the back row. Think of the

girls who had to work late, so that by the time they arrived only end seats in the balcony were vacant. Consideration for them will keep you close to the microphone.

If someone is on hand to adjust the microphone before you speak, stand about a foot away from it, so that you will be at a comfortable distance when your voice has been adjusted. In some cases, you may have to regulate your position to the mike. If you hear a humming sound or a noise like a board being dropped, you will know that you are too near or that you are speaking too loudly; if you are afraid of speaking too softly, ask the audience, "Can everyone hear me clearly?"

Since an audience always likes to have a good view of its speaker, you will oblige them by adjusting the height of the stand so that the mike will not cover your face. The audience should be able to get the full benefit of your expressions, especially your smile.

*During a prepared speech.* If a speech is to be broadcast or if advance copies have been given to the press, it is essential to follow a script. Whether it is one that you have written, or whether it has been ghostwritten, it should be rehearsed ahead of time. Then you will be able to make the extra marks of punctuation—dashes and underscoring—that radio talent find necessary if their material is to run smoothly.

When your talk is to be broadcast, your visible audience should not be ignored. The people who have spent time and money to come out to hear you will hardly feel complimented if you keep your head bent over a stack of pages all the time. Here again, the rehearsals will have helped, enabling you to get along with only an occasional glance at the script to prompt you.

**Making a speech.** *The opening.* While a speaker is being introduced by the chairman, he listens attentively to what

is said. It gives an impression of false modesty for him to laugh self-consciously, wink at the audience, smile at individual friends, or shake his head negatively.

As soon as the chairman has finished his introduction, the speaker who was introduced rises. If he is on a platform, he comes forward without hesitation. He shows appreciation of the chairman's introduction in one of several ways. In all cases, he looks at the chairman, not at the audience. His acknowledgment may be expressed by "Thank you," and a slight nod; "Thank you, Mr. (chairman's name)"; a smile only; or "I appreciate what you have just said" (when the introduction contained legitimate praise).

If the chairman makes the mistake of embarrassing the speaker—and the audience—with exaggerated phrases of admiration, the speaker should not betray his annoyance by denying the introduction. To say, "I'm afraid that Mr. White has exaggerated my abilities," or "I've never had so many compliments pinned on me at one time" will sound quarrelsome and not modest. When the introduction has been oversweet, the speaker need only make a slight nod, without a "Thank you." If he has an apt joke ready, and if he has the knack of delivering it good-naturedly, he can illustrate how lightly he has taken all those flowery words.

The speaker opens his talk by addressing the group and, as he does so, he looks in the direction of those he mentions.

ON A FORMAL OCCASION. If the occasion is strictly formal, the opening words might be "Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen" or "Mr. White, Ladies and Gentlemen" (when "White" is the chairman's name).

A lady is addressed as "Madam Chairman" (with "Madam" accented on the first syllable) or as "Mrs. White" or "Miss White."

ON OTHER OCCASIONS. On less formal occasions, "Mr. Chairman" is heard less often than "Mr. White." At meetings of employees' clubs and business clubs, "Mr. President" is frequently used.

"Members and friends of the —— Club" or "Members and guests of the —— Club" is the usual form in clubs; simply "Members of the —— Club," when no outsiders are present.

At a social gathering of employees who are not organized into a club, the salutation is "Employees and friends of the —— Company" or "Employees and guests of the —— Company," or, "Employees of the —— Company."

For a long time it was the custom for a speaker to acknowledge the presence of invited guests and other speakers on the program with him, but lately this practice has been dying out. It was intended as a gracious gesture, but on any but the most formal occasions it now seems a little too stately. The greeting "Ladies and gentlemen" or the use of the term "and guests" or "and friends" is considered to include those at the head table. However, the chairman is still addressed separately.

Since the speaker himself is in the best position to realize when a detailed introduction should be made or when a guest of honor should be specially mentioned, the order of such an introduction is included here for his guidance: the chairman; the guest of honor; other speakers; invited (or honored) guests; the audience, collectively.

For example, the occasion may require particular mention of the following group: "Mr. White, Mayor Jones, Mr. Brown, Miss Thompson, honored guests, employees and friends of the —— Company."

EXPLANATION: Mr. White is the president of the employees' club and is serving as chairman. Mayor Jones is the guest of



honor. Mr. Brown and Miss Thompson are two other speakers, in addition to the speaker who has just made this introduction. As for naming a woman after the men, in this illustration let us suppose that she is less prominent than Mr. Brown. If she were more prominent, or if she were an outstandingly fine speaker, she would have been placed second or first on the program and named ahead of Mr. Brown. "Honored guests" includes business executives from other firms who have been invited to sit at the head table. "And friends" is added when the employees have been permitted to bring guests of their own.

*Getting along with an audience.* Even though you are an amateur at speechmaking, you may impress your audience more favorably than someone else who knows all the tricks. In your concern to make a good speech, you are likely to spend so much time in preparing your material and carefully checking your facts that the audience will instantly perceive your sincerity.

Sometimes when a person has done a little public speaking he grows lazy and thinks, "I can drag out those notes I used at the —— Club last month and give the same talk again to the —— Club tomorrow, and nobody will know the difference."

Only if he is a professional speaker, with an engagement nearly every day, is he likely to appear before two groups so similar that the same talk can properly be given again. Other speakers are exposed to the distrust of an audience as soon as it becomes evident that no special preparation has been made to instruct and entertain this group exclusively.

A businesswoman who is in steady demand to appear before business organizations, despite her high fee, has told close friends that she treats every engagement as if it were her first. She weeds out her former notes carefully and keeps

only the material that directly applies to her subject title; she injects new facts wherever she can, in order to give her audience the benefit of the latest information at hand. If she feels that the subject calls for it, she draws up a completely new speech.

When she is satisfied with her preparation, she rehearses her whole speech, keeping in mind the particular group that she is to address and the questions that are likely to be in their minds.

Her sincerity is the greatest compliment that she could give to an audience. In return, she enjoys the most attentive listening.

In an effort to come close to an audience, a speaker sometimes unknowingly does the very things that alienate his listeners. He may punctuate his statements with occasional swearing because he thinks it lends informality—"just as if I were talking to a bunch of the boys." Unfortunately for him, these "boys" find his expressions in bad taste.

He may make jokes poking fun at religious beliefs or at people of certain races. He would probably never dream of insulting an individual, but he makes enemies right and left with his ill-placed humor. A joke, moreover, should be reasonably brief and always tactful; and it should be worked into the text with apparent ease. Otherwise, it falls flat.

When this blundering speaker wants to be generous with his information, he reads long lists of figures and shows innumerable charts. By this presentation all he actually gives is an acute attack of boredom.

The public apology is another mistake that may be chalked up against a speaker. He says, "I must ask you to bear with me as I have come unprepared" or "I have nothing to say of importance" or "I'm afraid I don't know how to speak in public." He shouldn't inform the audience that he thinks so

little of them as to have made no preparation. When an apology is in order, as when a speaker has to cough or blow his nose because of a cold, he says, "I'm sorry" or "Excuse me," and resumes his talk as quickly as he can.

*Mannerisms.* An audience is annoyed by the speaker who abounds in meaningless attitudes and gestures. Without thinking, a man will put his hands in his pockets and teeter back and forth, back and forth. A woman is likely to wave her hands around as she talks, until she seems to the audience to have as many arms as Siva. Other mannerisms that tend to provoke an audience into actual dislike for a speaker include playing with eyeglasses, scratching, patting the hair, and pausing frequently as if expecting applause.

Sometimes the mannerisms are deliberate. Having had to sit through many a tiresome speech in the past, a speaker will do all that he can in an effort to keep his own audience interested. He will use gestures, shout, pace the stage, and swing his watch chain. If he aims simply to keep the audience watching him, he succeeds. All that they can do is to watch him, too much occupied with his actions to pay attention to what he is saying.

**Interruptions.** No matter how experienced a public speaker may be, he cannot count on being spared the sudden challenge of an interruption. The sensible way to meet the challenge is with good humor. In fact, that is the only weapon in his favor, for frowning, sarcasm, or a show of impatience would only make him a ridiculous target.

Among many entertaining stories that illustrate the resourcefulness of speakers noted for their wit are the following:

One is about George Bernard Shaw, who was heckled by someone in the balcony calling out a loud and sustained, "Blah." Shaw grinned and looked up, saying, "Brother, I

agree with you, but what can the two of us do against so many?"

When "Jimmie" Walker, former Mayor of New York, was speaking at a dinner one night, a waiter slipped and dropped a tray full of dishes. After the explosive crash, Walker is reported to have glanced in the waiter's direction and remarked easily, "I know just how you feel. I slipped once myself."

Not all speakers are masters of the quick retort, but there are other ways of displaying good humor toward an interruption. When a noise is of short duration, like that of a fire engine racing by or of trains being shunted, it is better to pause than to try to compete. If you strain your voice to be heard, it may not carry over to the audience, anyway, and the unwelcome result of your effort may be a fit of coughing.

If the interruption is inside the building—a banging radiator or a rattling window, for instance—you may be able to grin and pretend to find something amusing in it. As a visitor who has come to speak, you're like company, and there is nothing you can do to remedy the annoyance. An alert committee member sitting in the audience, however, should try to stop the disturbance. It may be necessary to hunt up the janitor, but sometimes all that is needed is to knock the radiator handle or to wedge a piece of paper against the window frame. Whatever may be done or left undone, try to continue looking pleasant, for every speaker learns, in time, that he cannot fight a distraction of this kind.

Although it is doubtful whether a speaker before an audience of businessmen and businesswomen ever received a "Blah" from the balcony, people who have attended many meetings will tell you that interruptions from the audience are not uncommon. Usually they are the result of too great enthusiasm on the part of some member.

Sometimes a speaker will pause as he is talking and, while he is groping for his next words, he may say, "I can't remember the name of that firm at the moment," or "I seem to have forgotten the amount spent on that project." It is not necessary for anyone in the audience to prompt him but, if someone does, the speaker should say, "Oh, yes, it was the Such-and-Such Company. Thank you."

Sometimes an interruption comes from someone who has so acute a fondness for detail that he makes the mistake of correcting the speaker. At one meeting the speaker handled this kind of interruption neatly. He said, "A gentleman in the audience has just pointed out to me that two and a quarter million bales were exported, and not two million as I said. Thank you, Sir" (looking pleasantly toward the man). Then he went on with his talk.

Another form of interruption springing from overenthusiasm is that of asking questions. Although the speaker may intend to accommodate the audience with a question-and-answer period at the end of his talk, and may feel justified in saying so, he will seem a little sharp if he replies, "I'm taking up questions at the end of my talk." Successful speakers have found it best to smile and ask the interruptor, "Would you mind repeating that? I didn't quite hear." When the question has been given again, the speaker repeats it for the benefit of the audience and immediately proceeds to answer it as briefly as he can. Then he asks, "Does that answer your question?" The questioner usually nods his head, and the speaker says, "Thank you."

If, however, the questioner persists and, instead of nodding, begins some argument or presents another question, the speaker may say, "Now, that's an interesting point, so I should like to save it for discussion during the question period. Will you mind if we wait until then?" Thereupon,

without giving the talkative member a chance to say anything more, the speaker picks up his talk where he had been interrupted and goes on. If there is to be no question period, he might suggest instead that the interrogator see him personally "at the end of the program."

It has been found that when a speaker, in an effort to be very courteous, discusses a question back and forth with one person, others in the audience are likely to be annoyed. They don't care to listen while one monopolizes the attention, when they might be hearing the speech that had been prepared for them all.

Another type of interruption from the audience takes the form of unspoken rudeness. It may arise from someone who arrives late and heralds his approach with heels clacking and a great bustling to get seated. It may be contributed by a pair of talkative friends, who don't seem to realize that the speaker can hear them just as surely as they can hear him.

A speaker's first impulse is either to glare or to raise his voice to a shout, so as to be heard. Neither method will work. If he glares, he estranges the entire audience, for they will instinctively be on the side of the one in their group who is being censured. By shouting, a speaker merely affords a louder blanket under which the chatterers feel they can talk without being overheard.

Tests and the experience of others have shown that the best thing you can do when late-comers are disturbing is to slow down your talk a bit, repeat a point that might have been missed, and then continue at your regular tempo.

When you have competition from chatterers, talk more softly—yes, quite softly—so that the audience has to strain to hear you. Then give no more than a short glance in the direction of the disturbance. Leave the rest to the audience, who

will do the shushing and the glaring at their members who are making it difficult for them to hear. As soon as it is quiet again, you may raise your voice to its former pitch.

There are interruptions that sometimes have to be made by the speaker himself or by the chairman. A bothersome hall light shining in the speaker's eyes may make it necessary for him to ask that someone close a door. A speaker ought not to be finicky about such matters, for he will have to face exit lights anyway. However, if an unshaded bulb is very trying, he can probably find some point in his talk where he can pause and say, "I wonder if someone sitting near that side door would mind closing it, please.—Thank you very much, Sir."

Sometimes the only hall available in a locality has a seating capacity far larger than is necessary for the meeting. When the empty seats are fairly numerous, the chairman should delay his opening remarks and urge the audience to move forward and fill up the seats in front. As people are moving a tactful chairman may be saying, "We knew the hall would be too big when we hired it, but it was the only one available. As it is, the ticket chairman has just told me we have 300 here tonight, more than we expected." People will be in a more anticipatory mood if they feel that they are part of a large audience.

An audience has often been puzzled when asked to interrupt the proceedings by standing up and giving three cheers for someone. The connection with etiquette is remote, it develops, for the movement is simply a means of giving people a change in a long program. It is like the seventh-inning stretch.

**In closing.** If there is a question-and-answer period, the speaker and the chairman both stand during it. Keeping in

mind the shortness of such a period, a speaker will oblige the audience more by giving fairly brief answers than by devoting so much time to answering the first question there is little opportunity for others to be heard. In a genuine desire to be helpful, he might refer people to books or other sources of information as he explains, "The shortness of time does not permit me to answer as fully as I should like."

It is just as necessary to be tactful and explicit when speaking to 500 people as it is when you're explaining something to your assistant or telling the boss how a new system is working out; for the group of 500 is composed of people like your assistant and your boss, who want to learn what you have to tell them. When you offer what you have to say with all the sincerity and courtesy that you would show to any one of them individually, you are the kind of speaker that all are eager to hear.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe at least four ways in which a chairman can contribute toward the comfort of both the speaker and the audience.
2. When is a lady generally given a corsage? What arrangements are made for selecting and presenting it?
3. How is payment made
  - a. When a speaker is engaged through a lecture bureau?
  - b. When arrangements have been made directly with a speaker?
4. Besides thanking a speaker who makes no charge for his talk, is any further courtesy shown?
5. How can a chairman tactfully regulate a speaker's time?
6. When a toastmaster is chosen, how can the chairman cooperate with him?
7. In what ways has a chairman's courtesy helped a speaker to put over his talk successfully?



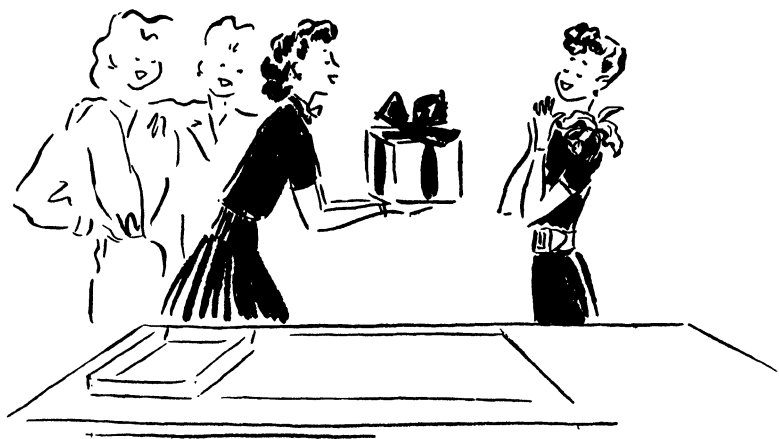
8. In your role of chairman, at what times do you stand?
9. What considerations should be shown a speaker in the matter of conducting a question-and-answer period?
10. What courtesies are shown to an invited guest? What is expected of him?
11. What are a speaker's obligations, once he has accepted an engagement?
12. In what ways is it customary for a speaker to open his talk
  - a. On a formal occasion?
  - b. On other occasions?
13. When a speaker feels that he should make a detailed introduction, what is the order that he should follow?
14. To what extent is it desirable to use jokes or anecdotes in giving talks?
15. If you were speaking, how would you handle interruptions of the following types?
  - a. Fire engines going by
  - b. A radiator banging
  - c. Help from the audience
  - d. A question from the audience
  - e. Late-comers
  - f. Chatterers
  - g. A bothersome light in the corridor
16. How can you become the kind of speaker that everyone is eager to hear?
17. Assume that you are to be chairman at a business luncheon held by a club to which you belong. You will have to introduce three guests and the speaker. (Choose for the speaker some person whom you know or have read about and select guests who would be likely to be invited if the occasion were a real one.) Make out a time schedule; plan the seating arrangements for the head table; and write out your opening remarks, introductions, and closing remarks.

18. Adopt the role of speaker and address your class, your family, or a friend. Start off by acknowledging an introduction from the chairman, next address the "group," and then open your prepared speech. Continue speaking for a few minutes, in order that your auditors can comment on your voice, poise, and mannerisms if any.

## **Part 5**

### **The Social Side of Business**





## **20. A VARIETY OF PROBLEMS**

In business the occasions are varied, and sometimes frequent, that have to deal with gift giving, going to places in groups after work, and other social problems. Established precedent in a firm will determine what is to be done in familiar cases, but when a new situation presents itself the procedure is not always so clear-cut. It may be that nearly everyone will have a different idea as to how things should be done, so that little pleasure and much confusion will result. Worse still, there may be hurt feelings.

The information in this chapter reflects, for the most part, the customs among large groups, such as those in banks, insurance offices, public utilities, telephone companies, and department stores. Obviously, more social occasions are likely to arise when a group is large than when it has few members, and that is one reason for the choice. Another reason is that there is likely to be more discipline in a firm that employs large numbers, and this makes it necessary for people to ad-

just their social habits to the businesslike atmosphere that cannot be too greatly disturbed at any time.

### GIFT GIVING

In some firms, gift giving is kept within reason. When a person receives a present from the crowd, it is in celebration of an occasion worth remembering. In other firms, however, the practice is carried to one extreme or the other. Either people are taxed too high and too often or the attitude is so conservative as to seem stingy. When people find that collections are becoming so frequent as to be a nuisance, they should never hesitate to refuse in a pleasant way.

**Collections.** In large companies, and especially in places where there are a great many girls, the management has usually found it necessary to establish rules limiting the amount of money that may be collected for gifts. Sometimes it is 10 cents, with a quarter the limit for something special, such as a wedding present. The rules go even further and do not allow collections to be made outside one's own department.

Employees who work on a temporary or a part-time basis and those only recently hired are not to be included in the gift giving. It would be embarrassing to ask for a contribution and to be asked, in turn, "Who is Mary Smith?" As to the question, "How long is an employee expected to have worked before being asked for contributions or before being given a gift?" it has been found among various firms that the answer is "About three months." This is an average length of time, probably established among the larger companies because an employee is required to work that long before he is considered permanently acceptable and eligible for insurance and other benefits.

In small groups, the occasions may be so infrequent that some will feel like giving more than a quarter. However,

rather than to set an arbitrary amount, the one who does the collecting would show good manners by simply saying, "You may give whatever you wish." Sometimes a person may say, "I'd like to give the same amount as the others. How much would that be?" Then the collector should answer, "So far, they've given from 35 to 50 cents, apiece." No names are mentioned.

The person who does the collecting is ordinarily the closest friend of the recipient, if the group works under informal conditions. In other cases, the money is more likely to be collected by the department supervisor or the manager's secretary.

If you are the collector, you would ask a person orally if he wishes to donate. If he does, he would drop his money into the envelope that you carry. When there are a number of people to see, it will save you the embarrassment of asking someone twice if you carry a list of names and cross off each one who has donated. A collector might make the mistake of entering on a list the amount of money that each person donates. Although this is done as an evidence of honesty in handling the fund, it might give the impression of being done from a prying motive.

*Methods for making collections easier.* In many firms, the management has felt that it would be fairer for everyone if a system were set up for making collections, so from time to time various methods have been tried out. Those found most successful, so far, and continued from year to year, are explained below. You can probably find among them one that will fit the needs of your organization and help to make gift giving the pleasant occasion that it should be.

**THE FUND.** A fund is established, with maximum and minimum amounts set.

In one firm, the office manager's secretary collects 10 cents from each employee on pay day. When the fund has reached \$30, no more collections are made for the time being. Moderate amounts are drawn for gifts, or for flowers when some one is ill, and when the fund has dropped to \$7, the 10-cent weekly collection is resumed. It is continued until the fund has been brought up to \$30 again. This arrangement is along the same lines as a petty cash account.

**USE OF PROFITS.** An even more agreeable method is to use the profits from a machine dispensing candy or soft drinks, or from a counter in the lobby. In one firm of about seventy employees (many of them are outside salesmen, so the all-day force is considerably smaller), there is enough revenue from a machine to provide a ten-dollar present when one leaves or is married.

**CLUB DUES.** In at least one firm, the employees have a bowling league. Every Tuesday night, after work, they bowl three strings (and those who don't have to hurry home, stay and have dinner together). They pay the treasurer their alley fees, plus a nickel for dues. Whenever an employee is absent, the only charge is the 5 cents for dues. With a group of 40, these weekly dues of \$2 mount surprisingly fast.

**A CANADIAN PLAN.** In Toronto our Canadian neighbors have found the answer to continual canvassing for outside welfare and charitable organizations. In some 300 firms, with over 70,000 employees, each person contributes the wage value of 15 minutes of his time: if he makes 60 cents an hour, this means 15 cents a week. The money is collected through pay-roll deduction, and it goes directly to the charities specified when an employee authorizes this deduction.

**Enclosing a card.** The message on a card and the address on the envelope should always be handwritten, not typewritten.



*Plain white card.* When a plain white card is enclosed, it is customary to write a short message. There are many variations to fit individual cases, but the following are suggested as simple, basic messages:

"With all good wishes," when someone has become engaged, or is getting married; also, in case of illness.

"Congratulations and good luck," for birthdays, anniversaries, and the new job.

"With deepest sympathy," to accompany flowers sent for a funeral.

Signatures are as follows: "A. B. Carter and Company," if the firm pays for a gift; "Your friends at A. B. Carter and Company," if the employees contribute or if the money is taken out of a fund. It is the same if the executives contribute, too.

More often when there have been individual contributions, each person signs his name. If there is not enough time to pass the card around for signatures, a good penman will write all the names in alphabetical sequence.

*Printed card.* Sometimes a group prefers to enclose a greeting card with a friendly verse printed on it. This would be signed informally by everyone who contributed.

**When an employee becomes engaged.** When a man in a business position becomes engaged he often prefers that his associates should take no notice of the fact. They probably won't even hear about it. Many men say nothing about their weddings, either, but the news may just travel around after someone has seen it in the paper. When a girl becomes engaged, however, the situation is different. Showers and parties and trousseau collecting start, and this makes it quite natural for her companions in business to join in giving her a little celebration.

If girls have known one another in school and then have worked in the same place for a few years, they probably would prefer to hold an evening shower at someone's home. Such closely knit groups are the exception in the big city, however, where people change jobs and develop new interests. There it is more usual for the girl to be taken out to lunch or dinner, or to be given a simple little shower at the place of business.

It is seldom possible for all the girls in a group to go to lunch at the same time, so the bride-to-be is taken out by her most intimate friends. If a dinner is given, instead, the entire group will probably go. In a large department, this group would include only her own unit, not all the workers on the floor.

One of the girls acts as banker, paying the total check and tip. The others, making note of the prices of their meals, reimburse the banker, when they have returned to work, adding a proportionate share of the balance, which would include the tip, the meal tax, if any, and the meal for the engaged girl. It would be embarrassing for a guest to be taken to dinner and then have to sit by while the others were adding and subtracting expenses.

In some firms it is customary for a girl to be given a corsage, besides. In such a case, all the girls contribute, including those who were unable to be present at the lunch. Unless this is a well-established precedent, however, and one that the girls heartily endorse, there is no need for starting it.

*Holding a shower at work.* When a department is quite small, it is sometimes possible for the girls to hold a shower at the place where they work. First someone would ask the boss whether he would object, but most men agree to allow this. Some of them will even plan their work so that the girls

won't be disturbed with dictation and rush typing for the short time that the fun will last. Women bosses enter even more genially into the spirit of the festivity, and often suggest crepe-paper decorations and suitable refreshments to make the shower more gay and exciting.

A kitchen shower provides the widest price range, because the five- and ten-cent store furnishes many useful items. A linen shower, on the other hand, calls for sets and monogramming, and the prices run high; relatives and close friends of the bride usually contribute such presents. A miscellaneous shower is a popular type. A price limit is always fixed and, with few exceptions, \$1 should be enough. So many useful and attractive presents can be bought at this price that the following list is offered only as a guide:

Washable place mats

Leather doily bordered in gold leaf, to put under a vase

Glass salt-and-pepper set

Towels

Nest of small ash trays

Half a dozen coasters for tumblers

Handkerchiefs

Sachet bags

An apron

Box of note paper

A pretty piece of china suitable to be placed on an occasional table

Decorative paperweight

Wastebasket

Telephone-book cover

Calendar

Glassware

**Wedding presents.** When someone at work is getting married, it is customary for the others to contribute toward a

present. They do this for either a man or a woman, and whether or not they have been invited to the wedding.

When all the coworkers of a prospective bride or groom receive invitations to the reception, it is not necessary for each person to send a separate gift. One present from the group is enough, but it is likely to cost more than what they would have given if they had not been invited. If several close friends among fellow employees are invited to the wedding reception, they will probably give individual presents, just as the other guests will do. They may, however, choose to cut down on the amount of money that they would ordinarily spend for an individual present, in order to be able to contribute toward the group gift, as well.

An employer usually prefers to give an individual present to someone who works for him personally. This includes his secretary and, in the case of a man with heavy responsibilities, his personal accountant and the assistant who works very closely with him.

Whereas shower presents are always modest, wedding presents may run from the modest to the very beautiful and costly. The character and value of the gift depend on the salaries of those concerned, on the degree of friendship existing in the group, and on the length of time covered by the business association.

Sometimes the firm gives a present, besides. It may be a check, it may be one of its own products—in many happy instances it has been both.

Generally, a girl's associates at work know her well enough to have an idea of her preferences as to color and are informed about the type of furnishings that she has spoken of buying. If a gift of silver has been decided upon, the bride's mother or a close friend may be consulted as to what pattern she has chosen. The silver would be given to her unmarked.

From the name on the box she will know where it was bought and can make arrangements herself to have initials engraved exactly as she wishes.

When the coworker who is being married is a man, he would be given his present personally at work. It is true that the rules of etiquette prescribe that the groom's friends send their gifts to the bride. However, when a man's friends are the people with whom he has been working every day, they would rather give him their gift personally. He can then take it to the bride. Business friends frequently like to give a man something that he himself can use, although at the same time the article will be an addition to the furnishings of his home. Presents of this type might include the following:

Humidor

Book ends

A picture that would be appropriate for a man's study

Magazine rack

Desk clock, lamp, or other accessories

When an employer's son or daughter is getting married, there is no obligation on the part of his employees to give a present; but there are times when it seems to be the pleasant thing to do, and a remembrance given with this feeling cannot fail to be deeply appreciated.

**Birthdays and anniversaries.** When a person has worked for one firm a quarter of a century or more, this is an occasion generally recognized by the management. In one company, a man or a woman with a 25-year record receives two \$100 United States savings bonds and an immense basket of flowers. In another firm, the employee who rounds out 30 years may take a guest on a 3 weeks' winter vacation to the South, with all expenses paid. In some firms, the gift is a watch, with diamonds decorating the lady's model. A well-padded bill-

fold or a check is the way in which still other firms remember the people whose anniversaries at work cover a fairly long period of time.

Birthdays are sometimes recognized, but this is the exception and not the rule. While anniversaries are in the province of the management, it is the employees who are birthday minded. Sometimes they plan to surprise the boss on his seventieth birthday, or they may give a younger man a remembrance when his birthday coincides with some special event in connection with the business that is his pride and joy. A gift for this type of occasion should be something that he can enjoy personally—at home, at work, or while traveling. It is more likely to fit in with a hobby than to match the living-room rug.

The following list is made up of presents that have come as such a surprise and have been so suitable for the men and women who received them that they have been treasured for years.

Sport equipment

A camera or a piece of auxiliary equipment

Desk barometer

Carafe

Clock

Luggage

Smoking stand

Pen set

A radio, portable or for the car

A painting

Set of books

**Christmas.** At Christmas time it is customary for an employer to give a secretary a present, usually money. In a firm where everyone receives a bonus, the secretary included, an employer's individual gift to her may not be large; but if a

girl has worked overtime and done favors for his family during the year, he will ordinarily take this occasion to give some special evidence of his appreciation.

Oftentimes in a work group the men, collectively, buy candy for all the girls. A girl is not expected to give a present to one of the men. In cases where this has been done, the man has been almost painfully embarrassed by it. As for the girls' giving presents among themselves, the newcomer will find it best to wait and see what the others do. If it is the practice to have a joke Christmas tree or to draw names and buy a better gift, she will be told about it.

**When someone leaves the firm.** *For another job.* During the wartime period of come and go, it would have been pretty hard on pocketbooks to take much notice of terminations. In settled times, the situation is different.

When a man has worked at least a year in a place and leaves for another job, his close associates usually take him to lunch. This is the custom also when a man is transferred to a different branch of the same firm. Under similar circumstances, the girls sometimes take a friend to lunch, but they more often give her a gift, instead. In accordance with the size of the group, this might be a piece of costume jewelry, a handbag, a compact, a pen, or an automatic pencil—any attractive article that will be fairly long-lasting.

When the boss leaves or is promoted to another city, both the men and the women of his department may wish to give him a present that he can use in his new job. The following list can be lengthened by many additions, depending on one's type of work.

A desk accessory

Slide rule

An accessory for the dashboard of his car

Technical books

*On retirement.* Sometimes a watch or a purse of money is given to a person on his retirement. It is then usually paid for by the firm, rather than by the employees, in appreciation of his long years of service to the firm.

Unless there is a rule against collections, it is considerate of the employees to give a separate gift, which he can cherish as a personal remembrance from his friends. The cost need not be great, but there should be genuine thoughtfulness.

Those who know him best might buy an autograph book, covered in leather, with his name imprinted in gold leaf. They would circulate it among all his associates for signatures, not omitting the president, and thus provide a remembrance that an older person especially treasures.

Another suggested gift is a life membership in an organization in which he has always had a special interest. It might be a religious or a charitable organization, or a group promoting scientific research or civic betterment. The fee in many cases is nominal, one that a large group can afford. With his name on the rolls, he will for the rest of his life receive the organization's publications and news of its activities, and to a person who has retired from business this gives a comfortable feeling of keeping in touch with progress.

If the firm does nothing to mark a person's retirement, and if it has never celebrated any anniversary, the employees can hardly see an old-timer leave with nothing but good-by's. In those firms where the management is the most niggardly you will often find the employees the most generous. They give a watch or a purse or a radio, accompanied by a well-chosen card and all their warm wishes. This is an event to be remembered.

**During a long illness.** As an individual, you would send flowers and gifts at any time you wished to someone who was away from work because of illness. A group does so only



when an associate is out on account of a long illness. By "long" is meant at least 2 weeks. If such absence extends over a very long time, more than one remembrance might be sent if there were a fund to draw on, but you might hesitate to collect from the entire group more than once. Very often an employee is remembered with books from the firm's circulating library or with letters, and these are the most welcome tokens of all.

Besides books and letters, gifts that would be enjoyed include the following:

*Flowers.* An attractive assortment will hold more interest than a dozen all of one kind. Roses and carnations mixed, or asters in various shades of purple and pink are attractive. Although a young girl would like a bowl of sweet peas, a man's preference is for carnations or annuals. Either a man or a woman who will be out for some time, would enjoy a flowering plant or a miniature garden that the patient can watch develop.

*Candy.* When you talk over the telephone with a member of his family and inquire how a person is getting along, you can at the same time find out whether he is allowed to eat candy. There is no possibility of its looking like an unimaginative duty present when you buy an excellent quality, daintily wrapped, or a mixture of glacé fruit, or the best grade of salted nuts in an ornamental tin that can be used afterwards.

*An assortment of preserves.* These can be bought in small jars, sometimes fitted into a rack.

*Other suitable remembrances.* Almost any shut-in would be pleased to receive fruit, a book, a package of the latest magazines, or one or two phonograph records.

Such items as a bed jacket, a folding tray, a back rest, and a small radio have been given under such circumstances.

These are all very desirable, but since they are suggestive of a long convalescence, it would be well to make sure, before sending them, that the patient isn't planning to return to work on the next Monday.

When the boss is out ill, employees of the concern are not always sure whether or not they should send a present. They often would like to do so, but hesitate for fear it might look like begging favor. It may be safe to assume that the boss, being human, would love to be remembered. The days drag by for him, too, when he is ill. If his work forces him to spend most of his time cloistered in an office, the general force may not know him very well. In such a case, the present is usually a joint contribution from his secretary and several assistants who work most closely with him.

A present may be sent direct from the store where it was bought, or someone who has a car may not find it inconvenient to stop, after work, at the patient's home or the hospital.

**Flowers for funerals.** When flowers are sent for the funeral of someone in the firm who has died, they are addressed to the nearest relative or, when that name is not known, "To the family of ——." If flowers were being sent because of the death of someone in the family of an employee, they would be addressed to that employee, even though he may not be the nearest relative. The florist can verify the address to which they should be sent, especially when a funeral home is being used instead of a private home.

Flowers are almost always paid for by the firm. They are sent on the death of an employee or of someone in his immediate family. Usually this would include husband, wife, child, parent, brother, or sister, if they had been living together. There can be no hard and fast rule at a time like this. If a girl had been brought up by her grandmother and had

always lived with her, surely the girl's firm would want to send flowers on the occasion of the grandmother's death.

When a newspaper notice requests that flowers be omitted, it is usually because the odor in a private home would be too heavy. This request will have to be respected, no matter how much a firm may wish to show its sympathy; but a few days after the funeral a plant might be sent. On the death of a Catholic, a mass may be given, instead, with a card from the pastor in place of the flowers.

**Other occasions.** What counts most in gift giving is the spirit. Suppose that someone hands you a package, with the remark, "I guess I ought to pay you back for the favor you did." You may start to protest, but what has been done is done now. If, when you open the wrappings, you find a present worth \$10, you wish you hadn't been given it.

Suppose, on the other hand, that someone says, "You've been so kind to me, won't you please take this?" Then, when you look at the simple little gift, you find it beautiful.

To attempt to state all occasions for giving presents is impossible, for they vary widely, according with the circumstances. For instance, if a man drives several girls back and forth to work every day, refusing to take any payment, they will be glad to give him a carton of cigarettes or to buy something for his wife, every once in a while. He is not only saving them train fare, but it is remarkably convenient to be driven to the door every morning.

In contrast, a man who comes to work at odd hours will occasionally pick up some of the girls he knows at work if he happens to drive by when they are waiting for their train. Because of the infrequency of such rides, the girls have to buy a monthly commutation ticket anyway, so there should be no reason for their feeling that a present is in order.

People who have lunch at the same restaurant every noon sometimes like to remember a waitress at Christmas. Sometimes, too, the girl who tends the counter in the lobby of the office building has been especially obliging, all the year. Whatever the reason for the gift, and whether it is given at Christmas time or spontaneously at some other time, the important point is that it should be given graciously. If it is money, the bill is clean and crisp and in an envelope. If it is an article, it is wrapped attractively, not left loose in a paper bag.

Whatever may be given is to be offered in a quiet manner, with a friendly smile and a few words expressing good wishes.

#### GIFT RECEIVING

When a person receives a gift from his friends at work, he is often too taken by surprise to do much but gulp. Then, as he gets over his bewilderment, he will want to be sure not only to thank the givers, but to show his gift. In fact, he will not put the cover back on the box until he is going home. If the gift is not a great surprise, no one will expect him to pretend that it is. However, while he will be more poised at first, his thanks should be voiced with the same earnest sincerity as if he had been taken off guard.

**The thank-you note.** It is not necessary to write thank-you notes for presents given at work for an engagement, a birthday, an anniversary, or at Christmas. However, you would no doubt feel like making some mention of it again later and, in talking with your friends, you could repeat how useful you find the gift or how beautiful everyone thinks it is.

You may have received a Christmas gift from a business acquaintance outside the firm—probably from someone who handles your employer's advertising or financial affairs and who visits the office frequently, or from someone who has

found you extremely helpful throughout the year in taking care of his business matters. You will be expressing the same thoughtful appreciation that he has shown if you send a cordial little note of thanks. Then when you see him personally, you can make some gracious remark such as you generally make to any friend who has remembered you.

When a girl marries, she writes a note of thanks for her wedding gift, commenting on its beauty or its usefulness or telling how well it fits in with her color scheme. Even if she goes on the briefest of wedding trips and is back at work soon, a written "thank you" is necessary. When a man at work is being married, his bride will add her written thanks to those that he expressed orally at the time the gift was presented to him.

Anyone who receives a present when he leaves a firm is expected to write a friendly note afterward. He will not only repeat his thanks, but he may say something about enjoying his new job or the section of the country to which he has moved—whatever will add interest to his letter. It should not, of course, sound as if it had been written solely from a sense of duty.

When illness has been the occasion of remembrance on the part of business acquaintances, the absentee will not wait until his return to let them know how much it has meant to him. If he is too weak to write, he may ask a member of his family or his nurse to telephone and acknowledge the present; then, as soon as he is well enough to sit up and write, he will do so. On his return to work, he will not forget to thank personally the one who undertook the choosing of the gift.

When flowers have been sent to a funeral, appreciation is shown by a note, brief but sincerely worded. A printed card

of thanks is used only when the family of a very prominent person or when such a person himself receives hundreds of messages of condolence. A suggested wording is as follows:

Senator and Mrs. Smith  
acknowledge with deep appreciation  
your kind expression of sympathy.

These cards can be used in replying to telegrams and to form letters of sympathy sent by clubs, storekeepers, and others whose expressions are kind but impersonal. Such a card is never sent in acknowledgment of flowers or of a letter that has been personally written.

The paper on which any note of thanks is written should be of good quality and without gilt borders or extraordinary linings. Whether it is monogrammed or not is entirely a matter of preference.

The salutation may be "Dear Friends" or "Dear Girls" or "Dear All"—whatever greeting first comes to mind being, as a rule, the most sincere. For a signature, the first name alone would ordinarily be used for a small, intimate group. Otherwise, it might be better to sign "Mary Smith" or "Fred Smith," not prefixed by Miss, Mrs., or Mr.

In the case of a small firm, the envelope might be addressed simply to the firm itself. In the case of a fairly large place, however, it would be addressed to the head of the department, if the money came from a fund, or to a close friend who would surely have been among those who donated.

As soon as the note is opened, it should be circulated. If the one who did the collecting will jot down on the envelope the initials of those who contributed, the note will find its way around to everybody concerned. So many papers are handled in business, that this seems to be about the only way to make sure that all the donors share in the thanks.

## DATES AND DUTCH TREATS

When a man and a woman go out on a business engagement together, the man takes care of the expenses—taxi or other fares, perhaps lunch or tickets of admission. The woman makes no offer of partial payment, since the man is reimbursed by the firm when he turns in his expense slip. It would make for clumsy negotiations if they paid separately on such a brief engagement.

A girl pays her own carfare if she has happened to meet a man with whom she works. If he offers to pay, she can simply say, "Thank you, but I have it right here," and continue whatever conversation they were having. If a man and a girl travel over the same route, she should be careful always to have her fare ready. Fumbling around for change when a crowd is waiting will prompt the man to pay for her, but it looks to him—and to the others watching—like petty chiseling on her part.

When a girl is out for coffee or is having lunch and a man from the same firm happens to join her, she would still pay her own check. She can prevent the awkwardness that a well-meant offer on his part might cause by slipping her check unobtrusively into her lap or close beside her plate. When a man has invited a girl out in the first place, he pays for them both without question.

It is the practice in many places for employees to go out for lunch together on the day before Christmas. When the group is composed of all men or all girls, it is a Dutch treat. The waitress should be asked to make out single checks, and each one will leave his own tip. If the men want a mixed gathering, they invite the girls and pay the expenses. No matter how informal the group may be at work, it is not the place of the girls to suggest a mixed date. Although they may

be sincere in wanting to assume their own expenses, they will find that men dislike the idea of going out with women and watching them pay.

When a group plans a date together after work, it would be considered bad manners for one to take along an outsider without learning first whether the others would like it.

One girl found herself left out of dates with the other girls she worked with in the store, because she had always taken along her sister. The group working together numbered four, so that the additional one made an awkward situation in restaurants and in buying theater tickets.

In another firm, a group of the younger men and girls went bowling once a week after work. It was strictly Dutch treat, with the crowd all good mixers except for one girl. Without seeming to sense their coolness, she always brought along her boy friend. Since he was a poor loser, as well as twice their age, the crowd simply forgot to include her when they resumed bowling after the Christmas holidays.

A girl will never develop self-assurance if she has to have someone close by her side all the time. When there are so many nights in the year for going out, she will find, too, that it is stimulating to join more than one group of friends.

Maybe, however, you are a girl who lives far from transportation or from street lights, and you would feel safer going home late at night if you were with a boy friend or with a girl chum from your own neighborhood. To ask the group bluntly, "Do you mind if I take someone along?" will put them in an uncomfortable position. Instead, the question can be asked of one close friend and phrased along more gracious lines: "Do you suppose any of the others will be taking friends along?"

When you plan to ask an outside friend, you will find that his adaptability is the most important qualification to con-



sider. You, yourself, will probably know everybody well, from working with them daily, but the person who is invited for an evening has to adjust himself at once. It would be unfair both to the group as a whole and to your guest if he couldn't talk easily and agreeably.

This is not the place for a girl who won't play unless she can be prima donna. Nor is the evening made pleasanter by taking someone to a dance who is just learning how to move around the floor. Each of these may be a very good friend of yours and may have qualities that make a twosome a treat, but neither of them is quite the one to take into a group whose members are already well acquainted.

#### SENDING CARDS

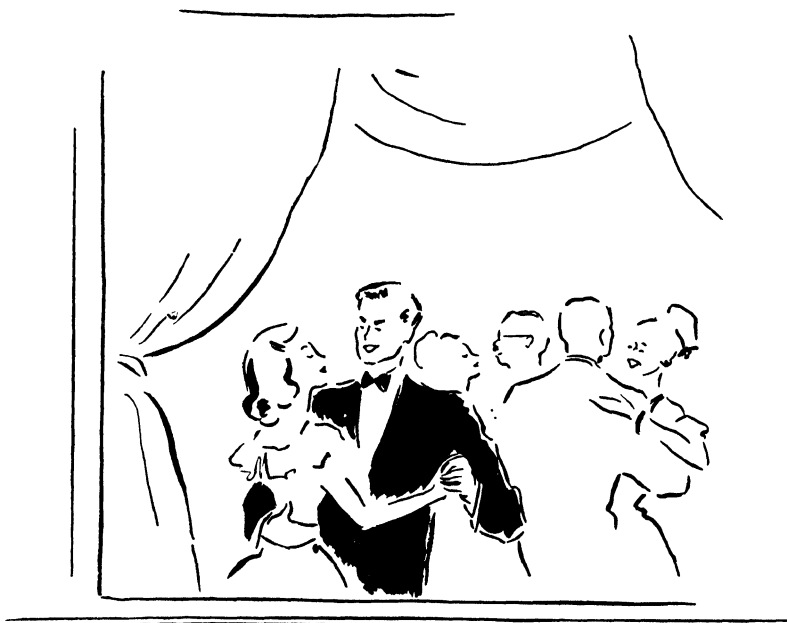
**On a vacation.** When you go on a vacation, you will probably feel like sending post cards to your business companions. If you work with a small group, you may, if you wish, send one card for them all to read. If you are in a large department, it would be enough to send cards to those whom you know best, with possibly one extra card addressed to the department, in care of the supervisor.

Send a card to your employer if you wish; but remember that there will be no privacy to your message, so don't make it whimsical. Just write something entirely impersonal and of general interest and that is all. Sign your first initial and your last name—E. Jones.

**At Christmas.** If you are in a small firm or a small department, you will be wiser and kinder if you send a Christmas card to everyone in the group than if you make a list of favored friends and leave out all the others. In a large place, you would generally send cards only to the people you knew best. It is preferable to use the home addresses if you know them.

If you send a Christmas card to your employer, address it to "Mr. and Mrs. ——," if he is married, even though you may not have met his wife.

If you happen to receive a card from someone with whom you work and to whom you had forgotten to send one, you will still have until December 23 to send a card so that it will actually be a Christmas greeting. If you have received yours too late for that, simply thank the sender cordially for the card and its wishes and say that you hope he had a fine holiday.



## **21. WHEN THE FIRM GIVES A PARTY**

More and more, firms are recognizing the good will and intangible benefits to be gained from an active social schedule. However, they have also found that a great amount of money can be wasted when things are not done right. It is not enough to hope that everybody will have a good time and then trust to luck. Well-made plans are needed for every party, large or small, if it is to be carried through smoothly.

### **WHEN THE GROUP IS LARGE**

In a firm of considerable size, there is usually a club to which all the employees belong. The president of the club, who has been elected by the members, would call on the

president of the firm, well in advance of the probable date for a party, and discuss it before further steps were taken. If the party is given by the firm annually, this might be a routine visit, but the club's representative would be lacking in courtesy not to make it. Besides, the question of budget and other matters might need to be taken up.

Unless some other arrangement is preferred, the club's officers, together with one executive from the firm, form a general committee. When there are fewer than 100 employees, this general committee can run an affair without additional help. As work becomes heavier with a greater number of employees, there will be a need for additional committees. Then the members of the general committee will find it more satisfactory to remain in an advisory capacity only, without definite duties to tie them down. This will leave them available for suggestions and decisions, when necessary, and ready to fill in if a committee member falls down on the job, is ill, or leaves his place of employment.

In a firm that employs a full-time social director, his duties may not only include the management of the recreation hall, cafeteria, library, and other employee services, but he may be available as a consultant for social affairs. When the employees number thousands, preparations are on so large a scale that it will be found better to have one person charged with the ultimate responsibility than to overburden the club officers. Under such an arrangement, the social director accomplishes his part best when he keeps in the background, ready to give guidance and assistance to the committees, but no more. When committee members are encouraged to do their own thinking, they are likely to bring out some very good ideas that might not have occurred to one person alone.

## WHEN THE GROUP IS SMALL

In a small organization the employees are not so likely to have a club; so when the president of the firm decides to give them a good time, he usually appoints a committee. This committee takes over the details of the work involved, but the initial planning and subsequent problems are left to the president's decision.

## WHEN THE EMPLOYEES PAY

Among groups of employees, both large and small, the bills for a party are sometimes met without assistance from the firm. There may be a sale of tickets, or the club dues may be high enough to take care of the social side of business.

In any case, the chairman of the employees' group would be considered thoughtless to start making plans without checking first with the head of the firm. It might be argued that, since the employees are paying for their own party and holding it after working hours, they have the right to hold whatever kind of party they want. They have the right, but it is only fair to give the firm's head the opportunity of making countersuggestions before outside negotiations get under way.

## WHAT KIND OF PARTY WILL IT BE?

An annual affair is generally run on the same lines every year. It is felt that what has already proved successful will bear repeating. However, if attendance has slackened during the last year or two, or if the age and type of employee has undergone a change, perhaps something different will give more enjoyment. A committee would be considered almost presumptuous not to give some thought to the preferences of the group that it proposes to entertain.

If a social affair is the first one to be held, an informal poll

among a few individuals of different temperaments hardly ever fails to bring out new and good ideas. Then the entire group can be asked, "Would you like a dinner dance?" "Would you like to put on a musical comedy?" "How many would go on an ice-skating party?"

**Formal or informal?** For an evening party, the general committee or the chairman will be expected to announce whether dress is to be formal or informal. This information can be given on the posters or on the tickets, or it can be circulated by bulletin, as long as it is announced somehow. When no definite decision is published, time will be wasted in speculation and no one will feel quite comfortable until he arrives at the party and happily finds that he is among the majority in his choice of costume.

In deciding the type of dress, a committee can prevent hard feelings by giving some consideration to the preferences of the people who will be present. After all, the purpose of a party is to give people a good time. It is a little high handed to announce, "the party will be formal and everyone is expected to attend." The proportion of men who own tails or tuxedos may not be very great. Such an outfit is expensive to buy, especially if it would hang in the closet unused for the rest of the year. Except in the large cities, a renting service may not be available. The women, however, know how charming they usually look in long dresses for evening wear.

Various plans have been tried by committees to determine what type of party would be the most popular. Here are several suggestions:

1. A questionnaire is sent to everyone, saying that a party is to be held in a few weeks and that the committee would appreciate knowing whether the employees prefer it to be "formal" or "informal." A ballot may be attached, to be

2. The committee members may speak to department heads and ask them to find out orally what their groups would prefer.

In either (1) or (2), unless the results are close, the majority wins. If the count is close, it is safer to make the affair informal or probably to follow plan 4. If the vote for formal wear wins, it should mean evening gowns for the ladies and tails for the men, but in many communities a tuxedo is considered sufficient.

A formal evening gown for a ball has a long skirt, which may be as full as one wishes, short sleeves or none at all, and a neckline that is cut out both in front and in back. For a formal dinner or a dinner dance, the dress is still long but without exaggerated fullness in the skirt; it usually has sleeves—long or short—and the neckline is not so low.

Formal dress for a man is the same at both dances and dinners. This includes a tail coat with black silk or satin lapels, a white stiff-bosomed skirt and starched collar, white tie and white waistcoat (none of them silk).

If informal wear is decided on, it means business suits, light or dark, for the men, and pretty "best" dresses of street length for the girls.

3. The posters announcing the affair can carry the designation, "Semiformal dress. Men may wear tuxedos or dark suits." (Tails and dark business suits don't mix well.)

A girl's dress for such an occasion would have a long skirt, sleeves of any length, and a neck cut rather high.

With a tuxedo—as the dinner coat is almost always called—a man wears either a stiff-bosomed or a softly pleated white shirt, a wing or a turn-down collar, and a plain black silk or satin bow tie. When the black waistcoat is preferred, it is made of material matching the coat or of silk. The white

waistcoat is made of piqué. No waistcoat at all is worn with a double-breasted tuxedo.

With a dark-blue or a dark-gray suit a man wears a starched collar and plain tie.

"Dress optional" means that day clothes are permitted, but the designation is often interpreted too broadly. A party has a rather dowdy look when light suits and tailored dresses, no matter how good they may be, are mixed in among formal clothes.

4. It may be decided to hold a general costume party or one of the variations—the poverty party, the red-and-white party, the Alice-in-Wonderland party, the Walt Disney party, the barn dance, and so on. Elsa Maxwell has thought up hundreds.

The announcement would read, "Come in costume. Grand march and prizes," and then in small letters, "Formal dress optional." By this plan, if the affair is to be held at a hotel or a club, the alternative of formal dress will ensure its looking smart. In a place less formal in atmosphere, such as the firm's recreation hall, or lodge rooms rented in the suburbs, the announcement would still stress the costume part, with prizes. The news might travel orally that informal dress was optional.

#### CHOOSING COMMITTEES

A list is made up of the people who, it would seem, might be able to serve best on various committees. This is done by the chairman of the employees' group or by the officers of its club, if there is one. A small committee is better than one that has a long list of members. Then everyone does some part of the work. In a large committee a member may feel that there are so many others, there's nothing left for him to do. Then the whole load is likely to fall on the chairman,



or things may not be done at all. At that stage the squabbling starts.

In drawing up committees, it has been found unwise to have the same individuals serve over and over again, no matter how well they may have done their part. While some in a group may not care who runs a party, as long as there is one, others frequently have quite different reactions. It seems to them that those in charge are serving only to be noticed by top management or to get in free or to be able to work in on some graft. Such feelings of suspicion, whether or not expressed openly, can spoil everything.

**When asked to serve.** When the members of a committee have been decided on, they are asked orally by the club's officers if they are willing to serve. The formality of a written note is not necessary.

This is no time to play hard to get. When a person is approached and knows that he can spare the time, it would be considered ungracious on his part to refuse to do what he can. If his personal life is taken up fully with previous obligations or with duties at home, so that he cannot give the time, he should thank the officer for asking him but explain briefly why he cannot take on extra work. In either case, the conversation should end in a final Yes or No, without any request for time to think it over or some other excuse for keeping others waiting for a definite answer. If the person who has been asked to serve is afraid of accepting because he has never worked on a committee before, this is his chance to learn and to begin having some fun. The aim is simply to give everyone a good time.

#### THE DINNER DANCE

The most popular type of evening affair is the dinner dance. We'll discuss the dinner dance that would be held by

a large firm, with anywhere from a few hundred to several thousand employees. For the firm with fewer employees, the work would be scaled down, but practically the same committees and duties would serve as a guide.

**Making reservations.** It's never too early to start planning. In the large cities, where the hotels are booked steadily for conventions and social affairs, it is probably best to make a reservation for the next annual affair as soon as the party of the current year is over. There is no necessity, of course, to have a party at the same place every year. An alert general committee may find by shopping around that some different place will offer far more satisfactory arrangements. The factors to be considered are price, size, attractiveness of the surroundings, convenience for leaving cars, and the menu offered.

There should be a thorough understanding with the hotel what expenses will be covered in the price offered. Too often tickets have been printed with a price stated, when no one knew whether or not it included the tax, checking, and tipping. At the best-managed parties, everything is included in one price, and this will be stated on the tickets; for example,

\$2.75 apiece, plus tax.

Checking and dinner tip are included.

The firms that give the best parties always see that every possible item is included, whether tickets are sold or whether the firm pays for everything. A corsage is provided for each lady and transportation home is furnished for those who otherwise would be put to this expense. When a close eye is kept on the budget, the corsages may be simple, the hotel needn't be the highest priced in town, and the orchestra won't need a coast-to-coast reputation to be good. The impor-

tant point is to have no unexpected expenses popping up, on the night of the party.

A number of girls in a certain firm have refused to go to any more affairs since their experience at one dinner dance. The tickets cost \$10 a couple, so the girls felt that it would be a particularly fine party to which to invite their boy friends.

As it turned out, they were met at the door by one group to collect the tickets and another to sell chances on a "door prize." During the dinner, a few girls in costume came around and sold chances for a "grand prize." At the end of dinner, each waiter plunked down a saucer, expecting each man to toss in a half-dollar tip. In the midst of the dancing, the music was stopped and another series of chances was sold. Even on the way out, there was a collection tray at the check-room counter!

**Arranging the menu.** A week or two before the dinner, the hotel or the caterer will need to know how much food to buy. If there are Catholics in the firm and the affair is to be held on a Friday or a fast day, the chairman of the committee that made the reservations will doubtless be offered two menus. If not, he should feel free to ask for a choice. One menu would have meat as the main course, and the other would have fish, while the rest of the dinner would remain the same for both. Since many Protestants make it a habit to eat fish on Friday, too, people who are experienced in making dinner arrangements feel that it is better always to offer a choice on Fridays. Also, regardless of the day of the week, it is thoughtful to consider the orthodox Jew's abstinence from pork products.

The employees are then asked which they would prefer. This may be done in one of these two ways:

When the committee on seating arrangements asks for a count of those attending (as explained further elsewhere in this chapter) the question may be asked at the same time, "Which do you prefer, steak or lobster?" or "chicken or whitefish?" or "turkey or salmon steak?" As much as possible, the choices are kept within the same bracket according to current market prices.

or

If tickets are sold, the members of the ticket committee will ask each purchaser what he prefers, and—if he is inviting someone—what he thinks his guest will prefer.

At the dinner, when the waiters remove the appetizer or the soup dishes they will ask each person, "Are you having —— or ——?" The hotel, through experience, will have allowed for a slight variation in the count, but it would be inconsiderate of anyone to change his mind at the table. It has happened more than once that some who could not eat the meat course and had ordered fish, finally have had to accept omelet.

**Reception committee.** All the members of the reception committee plan to be on hand well in advance of the time the party is to start. This usually means that they will have to ask to be excused before the workday is over, in order to have time to go home and change. If the firm will not allow this extra time, it will take some of the fun out of the affair to go around fussing about it. The only course to choose is to take the clothes from home that morning in a week-end case or a box, and change in the dressing room at the place where the party is being held. Professional talent often does this.

Two or three members of the committee remain just inside the entrance, where they greet guests and indicate the check

room and the powder room. They shake hands with guests invited from outside the firm, see that their wraps are checked, and then escort them inside. After introducing them to several of the club's officers and an executive or two, they make sure that the guests are comfortably seated or enjoying themselves in a group before leaving them.

The other members of the reception committee circulate among the guests as roving hosts. They make introductions among people standing near together who work in different departments and who seem not to be acquainted with one another. They bring the bashful ones and the new employees into pleasant groups where they will be made to feel at ease. Cliques are left alone, for a newcomer would only be made to feel unwanted among them.

When the right sort of people are on a reception committee, they can have a wonderful time themselves, besides helping everyone else to enjoy the occasion.

**Committee on seating arrangements.** There is nothing more stupid than to have groups of men eating together, while the girls are seated by themselves at other tables. It looks a little gayer, although it's about as boring, for people to stick together in the same groups among which they belong at work. The committee on seating arrangements has the chance to eliminate these blunders and to promote a lively, sociable atmosphere.

The first thing to do if you are on this committee is to secure an alphabetical list of employees from the salary or the personnel department. Posters and announcements would already have gone out; so about 10 days before the affair, you would send a notice to every employee somewhat as follows:

Hi, everyone. We want to be sure no one is left out the night of the big Dinner and Dance—next Thursday, October 18. Won't you please tear off the coupon below and drop it in the box set up in the Lobby. Do it today, won't you p-l-e-a-s-e. We really have to know how many will be there.

---

I am \_\_\_\_\_ (check one) going to the Dinner Dance.  
I am not \_\_\_\_\_

I am bringing  
my wife \_\_\_\_\_ husband \_\_\_\_\_ other guest (male or female?) \_\_\_\_\_  
Please sign your name here\_\_\_\_\_

Even with such detailed instructions, some of the slips will come back unsigned, some with everything checked, and some with nothing checked. Some persons will neglect to send in their slips at all, although they have every intention of going.

On your list write "Yes" or "No," and "Male," "Female," or "None," as may be required. When all the returns have been entered, those who have not answered should be reached and asked whether they are going. You may be able to catch some of them in the cafeteria or on the way in or out of the building, but finally it may be necessary to ask to be excused from your own work long enough to go to see them where they work. If they are under supervision, it will be a courteous gesture on your part to ask the supervisor or the department head first if you may speak for a moment to Miss Smith or to Mr. Smith.

Try to have your list completely checked 5 days ahead of time, or you will be faced, on the day of the party, with such answers as "Oh, yes, I'm going and I'm taking my boy friend,

and my girl friend and her husband want to go, too," or "I can't go. I forgot to tell you." You may reflect privately that a hostess would waste no time in crossing these people off her list in the future, but you just keep checking names until answers have been received from all.

When it has been definitely learned how many people will attend, the hotel or the caterer can tell you the seating arrangement. Perhaps the tables will be set up for eight places each, or some for eight and some for ten.

Let us suppose that the tables will be set up for eight. Glancing through the list, pick out eight persons, writing the figure 1, for the first table, before the names. Pick out another group of eight, with 2 written before their names; and so on until all the names and guests are placed. You and your friends on the committee may have to do a little erasing now and then, but don't spend too much time on these arrangements. The list you produce on the first try will be about as good as one that you've labored over 15 times. Just be sure that an employee and his guest are not separated and that the men and women are divided at the tables fairly evenly.

Considering the varying ages and personalities of employees in the average firm, you can't strive for well-matched couples. Your aim is to be like the host and hostess at home, who try their best to have a congenial group. At the same time, they know that there is no special stimulation for people who are together all the time and who make up a tight little set when they are grouped by themselves socially.

Unless all the executives of a firm are going to speak (and this would be quite dreary), they are placed among the crowd at different tables. Although there were no such intention, it might seem snobbish if they were all placed at the speakers' table or at one near by.

Some of the employees may come to you before the affair and ask to be seated next to certain others, or even not to be seated near them. It's not well mannered of them to do so, any more than it would be for them to make the request if you were giving the party as an individual at home. However, for the sake of harmony, you might answer pleasantly, "I'll do the best I can." If you say, "The seating arrangements are completed and I can't change them," you will immediately be badgered into telling them who else is at the table, and who is at the next table, and where Jim Smith is sitting, and so on.

You must use your own judgment about rearranging the list. If a man wants to sit next to a certain girl, by all means give him a break. But it is a question whether anything would be gained by your changing places to suit someone who is known for his interfering ways.

Using your final list, you will prepare the place cards. It is always in good taste to use plain white cards; but if something decorative should be preferred, suitable ones can be bought. You will need a space about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches long on which to write a name. The cards are written by hand, not on the typewriter. Each person's full name is used; as, "Mr. John R. Smith" and "Miss Mary T. Jones." For a guest whose name you don't know, the card reads, "Guest of Mr. Smith."

As you write the names on the cards, place them face down in the same alphabetical order as the names on the list. When you have finished, you can then go through your list and pick out the corresponding cards as you make up your groups. Slip a rubber band around each set of eight cards, with a slip of paper on top on which you have jotted down the table number.

About an hour before the time set for dinner, the waiters will generally have the tables set, except for water, bread, and



butter. The numbered signs for Table 1, Table 2 and so on should also be in their bases, at a side table, ready for you to place one on each table. It is best to place these table standards first, to make sure that no one has miscounted. If there is a mistake, there will still be time to ask the waiters to move tables or to set up extra ones. Then you will be ready to go around again and leave a place card on top of each napkin.

When you made up your groups from the list, you considered each group as a unit. Now, in placing the cards, see that as much as possible the men and women are seated alternately and that a husband and his wife are not placed side by side. Something may happen at the last minute that will make it necessary for you to switch a card or two. In a large party, it's not unlikely that someone will find that he cannot attend; or someone who hadn't planned to come, may arrive; or if there is to be speaking or the presenting of prizes, some person whose hearing is poor would understand better if he were placed near the speakers' table.

After that, responsibility will rest upon the guests to do their part toward making the dinner a pleasure for themselves. Everyone knows that at a social affair he is supposed to talk to the persons seated at either side of him, but at a company dinner this acquaintanceship goes even further. People at a table introduce themselves to the group, with someone taking the initiative by saying, "I guess none of us can see all the place cards, so I'll start by introducing myself. I'm Jim Jones, and the young lady on my right (with a glance toward her card) is Miss Ann Johnson." The one next to Ann takes it from there and, in no time, the ice is broken.

*Reference to the list.* If the crowd numbers fewer than 100, you will stand at the door of the dining room with the working list in your hand. As the people come into the room,

you will direct a few whom you know by name—"Oh, Bill and Mary, your cards are at Table 8." "Good evening, Mr. Thompson, you're at Table 5." The others soon find their places, as friends call to them or as they happen to see their tables while moving around.

If there is a larger crowd, it would be better to have the alphabetical list typed in triplicate. You and two other members of the committee would each have a copy. Two of you would stand on either side of the doorway as people came in, with the third member a little inside the room, to intercept those who did not think to stop beside you. As people came in, you would ask, "Name, please?" and quickly refer to the list and tell each person his table number.

When most of the crowd has come, one of the members generally moves around the room. With the list in hand he is ready to help anyone who is having difficulty finding his place.

Just before the dinner starts, you would tell the headwaiter that he is to speak to you if anyone needs to be paged. There is probably not a dinner on record where someone has not been called to the telephone. (A bellboy would not be found in a dining room, calling out a name. He knows that he must speak to the headwaiter, who will learn from you where the person needed is seated. Then the headwaiter would go over to the table, ask for the person by name, and quietly tell him of the message.)

**Committee on decorations.** When there's a big crowd, don't try to use candlelight. Although for a small party it may be attractive, among hundreds of people the danger of fire makes it inadvisable. Other little touches—like handmade favors, individual poems, and garlands of crepe paper—are never appreciated in proportion to the loving care that goes into their making.

Flowers are the perfect decoration, but their use must be governed both by the budget and by good taste. Even at a table accommodating as many as 12 persons, a lovely effect can be obtained with only a few flowers. They should come from a good florist, and a liberal amount of greenery will help the arrangement. Flowers sold by street hawkers are not second rate, but fifth rate, and they will hardly last through the soup course.

Unless the party is being held in the winter, the members of the committee might be able to draw upon gardens. Friends or other employees may be asked, but not too many. Experienced committees have found that people are so willing and generous that the donations often far exceed the need.

Corsages may or may not be included as one of the expenses of the party. By the illustrations given below, you may be helped to decide whether they should be provided in the case of your own firm.

1. In a firm in which not more than a half dozen women are employed among a large group of men, it would be thoughtful to provide corsages for the women members. When the girls and women are in such small proportion, they would probably have helped with many of the details in preparation for the party, and this attractive gift would be a way of showing appreciation. If wives and girl friends were invited, it would be left to the men to buy corsages individually.

2. Sometimes a company party is held only for the employees, and guests may not be invited. Since the women have no choice but to go unescorted, it lends a pleasant atmosphere to have flowers for them as they enter. These may be simple corsages presented at the door, or there can be arranged on a table a choice of pretty single flowers. Some

might be attached to bobby pins to tuck into a hair-do. Others may be pinned onto a piece of ribbon to form a bracelet or a neckband. The committee on decorations can save on the florist's bill by arranging these, themselves.

3. At some company parties where outside guests are allowed to be invited, the budget has been elastic enough to provide flowers for all the ladies. The committee on seating arrangements or the ticket committee can supply a count of the number expected.

4. At other company parties open to outside guests, to furnish flowers on such a scale would be too expensive. In a case of this kind, however, it is customary to send corsages to the wives of top executives and club officers, in appreciation of their husbands' extra personal time and effort. This might include eight: the wives of the president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer of a corporation, and the same titled officers of the employees' club. In a smaller group, it need include only one or two: the wife of the president or manager of the firm and, possibly, the wife of the unofficial leader of the group. Usually corsages are given also to ladies who are heads of committees.

It shows thoughtfulness to telephone, the day before, and ask each lady what is the color of the dress that she is planning to wear. You would explain that you are on a committee and you are about to place an order with the florist. This will not only ensure corsages in harmonizing tones, but it is a tactful way of letting the wives know that their husbands will not have to take care of this matter individually.

**Ticket committee.** A committee for tickets is needed if the firm is not paying the bills. At this point, the president or the general committee has to use special care in picking out people to serve. In an effort to appoint go-getters, it might be forgotten that overselling can do as much to slow down

a sale as underselling could. The minute that the employees are buttonholed and made to feel cheap for not buying tickets, or that a committee takes such drastic steps as posting on a bulletin board the names of those who have not bought tickets, all the good time is taken out of a party. It might as well be called off.

The best committee is one whose members are well known throughout the firm, so that when their names are announced the employees will have no trouble finding at least one of them when he is ready to buy his ticket. The members of the committee should also be perfectly willing to take turns at noon setting up a table near the front door or outside the cafeteria, where it can be seen easily by the employees. In a large firm, the ticket committee will need to have as members at least one person from each floor—possibly, one from each section. When their names are announced, either by bulletin or on posters, it might be helpful to add the department and the telephone number of each one.

All members turn in their cash daily to the chairman of the ticket committee. The slightest carelessness on this point will cause a chairman a great deal of concern. After checking these returns, he passes over the total amount of cash daily to the club treasurer. Money is not to be left in a desk or behind a counter overnight, nor should it be carried home.

Arrangements for safekeeping overnight are made with the cashier or with some officer in authority in the firm, as the treasurer or the office manager. When this money is handed over to the person who will keep it temporarily, it is well for the chairman of the ticket committee to have placed it in a sealed envelope with his name and the amount written on the outside. So many items of various sorts are often entrusted to the cashier or officer that he will appreciate being

saved the time that might be spent looking for an envelope when the money is called for, the next morning.

**Publicity committee.** All the committees cooperate, of course, but the two that work most closely together are the ticket committee and the publicity committee. They are comparable to the sales and public relations departments in business, with a frequent overlapping or even absorption of one another's duties.

The publicity committee will probably produce posters advertising the sale of tickets. If these are made by an employee who can do successful drawing and lettering, no payment is made to him, but he should add his name in a corner of the poster so that others will know who is this talented person. On the program, with the names of the other members of the committee, his name appears with the designation "artist" after it.

Sometimes an employees' group does not feel able to meet all expenses unless tickets can be sold to the public. If the firm's management agrees to this, it will be part of the work of the publicity committee to try to place its posters in the best spots for attracting a large and desirable crowd. It is natural to think first of the restaurants and stores patronized by the employees, in the expectation that these places will reciprocate by displaying the posters. No matter how much business you may feel that the other firm is getting from yours, you will naturally use the greatest courtesy in asking for the privilege of placing a poster on its premises. This is a favor, which may or may not be granted.

In a thickly populated business district, such restaurants and stores may have set a policy of not making any displays. If you meet with that kind of resistance, there is nothing to do but to accept the answer cheerfully and try elsewhere. When a poster is placed, it is customary to give the propri-

etor a pair of tickets free, and to urge him cordially to use them.

**Entertainment committee.** *At the dinner.* If the dinner is held in a large area, such as in the ballroom of a hotel, three to five musicians furnish light concert music. (This is apart from the dance orchestra, which arrives on the scene later.) Unless the musicians are experienced in playing for dinners, it would be well for someone on the entertainment committee to make sure that they will have an appropriate repertoire. This would include selections from operettas, as well as other numbers by such popular composers as Herbert, Kern, Berlin, Rodgers and Hammerstein. When there is to be dancing later, the crowd will hear enough of the current hits then, but two or three may be fitted into the dinner program as encores.

In smaller rooms, an accordionist might weave among the tables, accommodating with request selections. At some dinners there are two strolling instrumentalists, an accordionist and a guitarist; but when they are near, it is a strain on the vocal cords to talk above the sound of their music. Dinner music is meant to serve as a background to conversation, not as a competitor.

*At the dance.* When dancing is to follow dinner, the same room is in many instances used. At the end of dinner, the chairman of the entertainment committee stands up and announces briefly, "There will be a short intermission while tables are put away to make room for dancing." More explicitly he may say, "There will be an intermission of 15 minutes" or "The tables will be out of the way in 15 minutes, so please don't go far."

If the dancing is to be held in another room, the announcement would be somewhat as follows: "In 10 minutes dancing will follow, in the Wedgwood Room."

When an affair is being held in the firm's recreation hall, the entertainment committee will attend to having the tables taken away as quickly as possible. In a hotel, this work would be done by hotel employees and included in the flat rental charge, and the committee would only be getting in the way in attempting to help.

During the pause between dinner and the dance, someone on the committee should see the leader of the dance orchestra. He can be depended on to arrive in time. The number of musicians hired and the playing time previously agreed on should be checked, to make sure that there is no misunderstanding. It has frequently happened that an orchestra was ready with "Good Night, Ladies" at midnight, when the tickets had been printed to show that dancing would go on until 1 o'clock.

At the time that business arrangements are settled, the committee member can tell the leader if the plans include a grand march or other specialties. Although musicians are prepared to fill these requests, it will be easier for them if they know at the start of the evening how they should arrange their racks.

Specialties may be included to give variety to a program of straight dance music, but their primary purpose is to help people mix together and have a good time. The more successful the dance, the fewer the wallflowers decorating the hall and the odd sticks holding up the punch bowl. Even when people know one another through work and would be expected to have no trouble from self-consciousness, it is surprising how shy they sometimes become in new surroundings.

It will help a man get started on the dance floor if he will remember that it is a sign of courtesy to ask his dinner partner for one dance. He is under no obligation to dance with



all the ladies at his table; but when they are unescorted, it is one of the most agreeable things he can do.

There are many good books on party giving that describe novelty dances. The contents may cover everything, from the broom dance to the *varsovienne*; but whether they are simple or intricate, such dances get people out on the floor to enjoy themselves. You can make up couples through these various formations and dances, as well as through the dozens of games that have turned many a possibly dull evening into one of the liveliest.

In the matter of directing games, unless someone on the committee has had a great deal of experience in outside recreation work, it has been found best to hire a professional leader, pay his fee, and let him take charge of everything. When an amateur is directing, there is likely to be an impression of bossiness, no matter how unintentional the attitude may be. Under the experienced leader, control of the group is so masterly that it is not apparent. Besides, it is taken for granted.

A committee, however, can handle by itself the simpler methods of making up couples, as for the grand march, the Paul Jones, and the card dance, which are those most generally undertaken.

**GRAND MARCH.** After a ra-ta-ta-tat on the drums, you or the orchestra leader will call out, "The next number will be a grand march. Will you please take partners." Even when the announcement has been repeated several times, there will often be little groups of girls holding together and groups of men near by lacking courage to speak to them. A large firm is generally so highly departmentalized that people may know one another only slightly or not at all. As a member of the entertainment committee, you will be expected to circulate and help to bring couples together.

At a company dance, it is a rare thing to see equal numbers of men and ladies. In fairness to all, try not to have all the couples in the front of the line, leaving the excess girls or men to bring up the rear. To find themselves tagging along is likely to make them feel embarrassed enough to spoil their whole evening. As the couples line up, keep an eye out for those who will be left over, and place them by twos at different points along the line.

This placing can be done by saying, "There's room up ahead of Frank Brown," or "Look, Bill, there's a space next to Mary, in case you haven't asked a partner yet." Most persons are not pleased to be guided by the arm or otherwise touched, no matter how lightly.

One member of the entertainment committee who knows how to conduct a grand march, acts as announcer. He stands at the head of the line, counting off couples who should go to the left, to the right, and so on. When a hall is large, the march can be an elaborate affair, with unexpected turns and groupings that make for surprise and amusement.

Just as the end of the music is reached, there is a pause only long enough to turn a page of music before the orchestra goes directly into a dance number. The extra girls or men will be left out now, and so must leave the floor and sit down, but that cannot be helped. At least, the march had everyone on the floor and made partners for many who otherwise might not have danced at all.

THE PAUL JONES. Everybody joins in forming one large circle, the men and girls in alternate positions. When the music starts they weave in and out, the men going round the circle in one direction, the girls in the opposite direction. Each person extends a hand to clasp the other hand of every person he passes, first the right hand, then the left hand,

and so on. When the music stops, each man dances with the lady then facing him.

If the floor is not large enough to accommodate one large circle without awkwardness, it may be divided into two. The men form one circle and the ladies form another circle, inside the first. As the music plays, the circles rotate in opposite directions. When the music stops, each girl turns around and dances with the man then facing her.

**THE CARD DANCE.** Two packs of cards are used. A member of the committee takes one pack and distributes the cards, giving one to each man. Another member of the committee distributes the cards of the other pack among the ladies. To make sure that everyone has a card, after the orchestra has played a short fanfare to call attention, you ask whether anyone has been left without a card.

When you know that everyone has been taken care of, announce that everyone must find his partner—the person who holds the corresponding card. If a man has the eight of diamonds, he is to look for the girl who has the eight of diamonds; clubs won't do. The orchestra should start playing the dance set then. To have the music already playing while they search for their partners will stir the dancers to find them quickly. Otherwise, they might linger too long. As the couples are matched up, they go out on the floor to dance. Members of the committee, moving about the room, help in bringing couples together, giving special attention to finding partners for those ladies who are timidly holding their cards in hand, waiting.

When you are putting on any novelty, it is important to keep in mind the kind of impression you will convey. It is good to be enthusiastic, but never to push things to the point that will make you seem cross and strained. It is fine to have a voice that is strong and intelligible, but not to let it out in

a frenzied shout. To spend even a moment wheedling a grown man out of the corner to join the others will make you look as stubborn as he is, not just hospitable, in the way you mean it to seem.

You need not be made wretched by falling somewhat short of perfection. If something goes wrong that can be quickly remedied, set it right and then forget about it. There are, of course, some things that can't help being noticed; for example, a speaker's absence or a substitution in the entertainment. Then a public apology, brief and sincere, is sufficient. Take consolation from the assurance that a crowd rarely notices even the mistakes that seem calamitous to a committee. If you don't call attention to them, the chances are that they'll never be recognized.

Because of the money and the details involved, a social affair cannot escape being a business undertaking. Arrangements must be settled definitely and pleasantly with such outside interests as a hotel, orchestra, printer, florist, and others. But none of the efficiency involved is supposed to be made noticeable. The entertainment committee, the reception committee—all the committees—have the delicate task of managing things without in the least appearing to do so. It is like a motion picture. All that you see is the finished product, not the director and the script girl and the make-up artist and the photographers going about their work. At the parties that we remember best because of the ease and smoothness with which they were carried through, the committees themselves had a wonderful time, together with the rest of us.

#### DINNER AND ENTERTAINMENT

The committees that serve for dinner and entertainment are similar to those needed for the dinner dance, but the duties of the entertainment committee will differ somewhat.

**Entertainment committee.** Music may be provided during dinner, as at the dinner dance, but in this case there will be no dance to follow. Instead, at the end of the dinner, the chairman would ask the guests either to adjourn to another room for the entertainment or to leave their tables, so that the room can be cleared, and then to return in a stated time. Twenty minutes is usually long enough. Chairs are placed in rows around a raised platform, and all is ready for the show.

If the entertainment is made up of amateur talent from among the employees, the committee would be expected to have given auditions beforehand. This could be done during several evenings, at the close of work. That is the time to find out how much talent the performers have, instead of leaving it for the audience to discover.

The master of ceremonies, or "emcee," as Broadway has shortened it, is generally a difficult role to fill from the amateur ranks. When it is felt best to hire a proficient one from outside the firm, it is still correct to state on the program that the show is being given "by the employees of the —— Company."

Simply to furnish the emcee with a printed program is not quite enough for his purpose. It must be well annotated. Then he will know when the pretty blonde is coming on and can use his most complimentary adjectives; he will be prepared to fill in with his longest Pat and Mike story while the props are being arranged for the magician.

When professional talent has been hired, someone from the committee should be ready to meet them as they arrive, to direct them to the dressing rooms. Certain definite arrangements are frequently made in advance, such as cash payment the night of the show and transportation from the city booking office to a firm's outlying clubhouse. It has been found advisable for the members of the entertainment com-

mittee to get together earlier in the day, so as to make sure that each one knows which duties are his own responsibility. Then there will be no delays caused by misunderstanding.

It is customary to hold another dinner, a week or two later, for all employees who took part in the entertainment. This would include the amateur performers, stage hands, and members of the entertainment committee. If tickets had been sold, the dinner would be paid for out of the proceeds. More often, it is given by the management in appreciation of the good will that the employees have shown. This dinner should not require any planning beyond making reservations in the public dining room of a good hotel or restaurant. Whatever entertainment might be enjoyed, such as a floor show, would be the same as that shared by the public.

#### DINNER

For the dinner alone, there would be a speakers' committee—something not needed for the dinner dance.

**Speakers' committee.** This committee is expected to secure the best speaker available for the occasion. No matter how well qualified an employee may be to give an interesting talk, it is customary to engage someone from outside the firm. He need not be a comedian to be entertaining, although if he's a very good comedian there will be no doubt about his welcome. But the people you work with should not have inflicted on them a man or a woman who stammers or who is just a big bluff.

If several speakers have been invited, each of you on the committee will be appointed as host—or hostess—to one speaker apiece. Sometimes, when a member of another committee or an executive of the firm has been successful in securing a certain speaker, because of friendship, it will be natural for him to assume the duties of host. When there is

one speaker only, the chairman of the speakers' committee or the chairman of the entire affair will act as host.

In either case, the duties start by the host's taking a stand inside the door, ready to meet the speaker the moment he arrives. When you act as host, go with him to the check room, introduce him to the president of the firm, and if there is further time before dinner, see that he meets one or two other persons. You will be ready to meet your guest again when he is leaving. Then you will escort him at least as far as the dining-room door; probably, you will walk out to the lobby and chat with him there for a few minutes.

It is suggested that reference be made to Chapter 19 for more detailed consideration of the duties of the chairman in charge of dinner arrangements.

Sometimes at a firm's dinner a number of people will receive awards for winning at various intercompany sports or for attaining a certain sales quota. Unless there is room to seat them all at the speakers' table, they would be placed at the general tables as usual. When their names are announced and they stand up to say, "Thank you," the others in the room will be able to see them plainly. In an effort to include everyone at the head table, a committee has sometimes shown unintentional rudeness by placing people along both sides of a head table, so that a row of backs was turned toward the general tables.

#### DINNER AND BRIDGE

It would be a rare firm indeed, in which everyone could play bridge of the same quality. Here, more than in any other group, extremes abound—from the amateur who plays a little auction now and then with the family to the shark who plays every night for keeps. At a successful bridge party, the varied tastes must be recognized. The program will in-

clude bid whist, auction bridge, and contract. If tickets are being sold to the employees, it is a matter of business as well as etiquette to plan an evening that can bring enjoyment to all.

**Entertainment committee.** Here, again, the committees are the same as for the dinner dance, except that the functions of the entertainment committee are somewhat different. The title may even be changed to bridge committee or table committee; or there may be division into committees for prizes, table arrangements, and scorekeeping. Whatever the name, the intent of the committee is no less hospitable.

In hiring a room in which to hold a bridge party, it is important to choose one that will be well lighted electrically. The soft lights that are suitable for a dance are too faint for reading cards comfortably. If the bridge is to be held in the same room as the dinner, the hotel or the caterer is instructed to set up dinner tables for four, not the large ones for eight or a dozen. When the dinner is ended, the chairman would announce, "After intermission [and state how long it will be—usually 20 minutes], the tables will be ready for bridge." While the waiters are clearing the tables, you will remain to arrange them for the card playing. The hotel does not do this, nor does it furnish the equipment.

For a large crowd, two rooms are generally hired. At the close of dinner, the chairman will announce that bridge is to start in the adjoining room shortly, and the people will move in, to find things ready for the playing to start. You would have taken care of this work before dinner, in order to be able to eat with the others instead of having to bob up before the meal is over. Each table is equipped with two packs of playing cards and four score cards. These score cards can be bought already printed with numbers. Your duties during the evening will include that of scorekeeping, so you



should provide yourselves with hand punches for recording scores on the individual cards.

Unlike the public bridge parties, numerous in the city, a bridge given by a group of employees has a pleasant privacy; yet the group is not too small, as in most clubs or private homes, for progressive bridge. It lends a more congenial note when people can move around and play with other work associates. Making it duplicate bridge, as well as progressive, adds to the element of competition, particularly in a gathering where people will recognize their predecessors who held the same hands.

It has been found best to let the people start by making up their own foursomes. There are rules enough. The progressive system will soon change them around. When they are seated, the chairman of the entertainment committee should announce whatever rules are to apply. People also like to know how many prizes are to be given. Those who are not exactly Culbertsons find it comforting during the evening to think, "Oh, well, maybe I'll get fourth prize, anyway." Unless the group is predominantly of one sex, it is well to have prizes divided as nearly evenly as possible for distribution to the men and to the women.

**Prizes.** This brings up the question of asking business firms to donate prizes. If your firm has hundreds of employees whose purchases from another company run into a large amount year after year, it should not be considered out of place on your part to ask for a prize. If your firm is not very large and, consequently, there are not many employees to give the other firm their business, the request would not ordinarily be made. It would be like presuming on a slight acquaintance to ask a favor.

When prizes are donated, the committee members who

have the most thoughtful manners always take great trouble to make the generosity of the donors known.

On the posters is included the information, "Prizes have been donated by the following concerns: ——."

The night of the event, the prizes are displayed where they can be seen—preferably, on a platform. (In the case of large articles, illustrations would be used.) The name of each donor is typewritten on a card and placed next to the article.

Before the playing starts, the chairman of the entertainment committee reads a list of the firms that have given prizes.

When the prizes are distributed at the end of the evening, the name of the donor is repeated with each gift.

Since it is not uncommon for a firm having a large personnel to receive expensive items, such as a refrigerator, a washing machine, and articles of furniture, their acceptance can hardly be treated lightly.

#### DANCE AND BUFFET SUPPER

The best night to hold a dance and buffet supper is Friday or Saturday, when people won't have to think about getting up early the next morning to go to work. The best crowd for this kind of entertainment is one where the employees are young.

If dancing starts at 9 o'clock, the buffet tables would be ready when the orchestra takes a long intermission, at about 11:30. Dancing would continue after intermission until 1 o'clock. In the largest cities, the evenings are longer, especially at formal affairs. Dancing often runs continuously from 10 to 3 o'clock, as a Latin American band takes turns with the orchestra. Supper then is ready at 1 o'clock.

Referring to the committees described under the heading "dinner dance" we can see that, except for the publicity

committee remaining the same, and the committee on seating arrangements being eliminated, some changes among the other committees would be required when a dance is the principal event. The committees and their functions would be as follows:

**Reception committee.** The duties of the reception and entertainment committees that apply to a dance would be combined and handled by a reception committee alone. In addition, there would be one duty that was not necessary in previous cases.

When supper is ready, you or the orchestra leader would make the announcement and specify in which room the buffet tables are placed. At a big party, it will minimize confusion if the members of the reception committee stand near the tables and see that the guests keep moving along after they have helped themselves to the food. Too often, people fill their plates and then stand beside the serving table, blocking the way for others. You might suggest tactfully, "Perhaps you would like to eat at one of the tables over by the wall?" or "You'll probably find it more comfortable eating in the ball room. It's getting so crowded in here." If you hold an executive position in business, you will need to be particularly careful about making your hint so that it won't sound the least bit bossy. A hostess at a private party may make her directions to the point; but unless you use the greatest tact and the pleasantest expression, people who work for you will resent having such suggestions made to them.

**Committee on decorations.** This committee may well be the busiest one of all. Since most of the big dances are held within a few days of some festive date on the calendar, there is usually evidence that Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, Hallowe'en, or St. Valentine's Day is near at hand. Buffet tables are usually too heavily laden with food to permit much

in the way of floral centerpieces, but a bit of color in small bowls or in bud vases will give a very pretty touch to the few smaller tables.

**Ticket committee.** Members of the ticket committee have little time to dance, for it is their responsibility to keep out gate crashers. When a big-name orchestra is playing and the floor is the best in town, the boldness of strangers who try to walk by the door is amazing. The protective method used quite commonly is to stamp on the back of the hand everyone who leaves the hall. The ink is unnoticeable. When they wish to come back, a bluish light is thrown on the hand to show plainly who may reenter without question.

When dancing is the principal diversion of the evening, every employee should be permitted to take a guest. Many of the employees will prefer to go alone, just the same. They may plan to make up groups of their own at work, or there is no one at the moment whom they feel like inviting, or they would feel hampered when so many other partners were available. Since none of these reasons is concerned with money, it has been found best at company dances to admit guests free. Then the most sensitive person will not feel embarrassed at going alone, as if it had been the price that counted.

#### THEATER PARTY

A large firm would hire an entire theater for the evening. Either the regular performance is given, or a special show is made up of an advance release of a motion picture, together with professional stage acts. A short and friendly welcome by the president during intermission lends an agreeable note. In some firms, many employees hardly know what their president looks like. A theater party, of course, is no place for a pep talk, nor is it a suitable place for worrying people about their jobs by announcing that the business has

been sold. For a small group, the firm would buy a block of seats.

If the people would like to go home to dress, each person is given his or her ticket before leaving work, that afternoon. This distribution would follow whatever seating arrangement the head of the firm preferred, just as if he were host to a group of friends. He and his wife would stand in the lobby to greet the people as they came, suggest to little groups of twos and threes that they go in; then they themselves would go inside 5 minutes before curtain time. If possible, no one should be late, but a traffic tie-up may detain even the earliest starters. They will feel regretful enough to have to slip into their places after the performance has started, without having the further embarrassment of facing an annoyed boss who has been waiting in the lobby to give them tickets.

If the employees live at scattered points, they will doubtless plan to have dinner in town; so to make it a complete party, the firm should include a group dinner in the invitation. In case the whole group is kept together from the time of leaving the office, the head of the firm will hold the tickets until the lobby is reached. If the party includes only 10 or fewer, the host will wait until his entire group is collected and then turn in all the tickets at the door. When the usher has returned the stubs to him, he may informally direct the seating, if the guests have not already come together in the order that seems to suit them best.

When people are not invited to dinner before the theater, they are generally invited to supper afterward. For a crowd fairly well divided between men and women, and not too large, the firm might choose to make reservations at a smart night club. For a fairly large group, it would be better to

hire a private dining room in a hotel, within easy walking distance of the theater, and to have a buffet supper served there.

#### AMATEUR SHOW

An amateur show is an entirely different type of entertainment from those already discussed. There are no dinner or supper arrangements to be made and, except for a professional coach and possibly an orchestra, the talent is drawn wholly from the ranks of the employees.

There will be work for various committees—to take charge of tickets, programs, music, costumes, and so on. In almost every firm there are at least a few people who have had experience in putting on entertainments at church and for clubs, so the amateur show really offers fewer new problems than do the various types of dinners. However, several points will be discussed that are matters of etiquette among business associates.

**The cast.** In professional show business, it is practically unheard of for performers to be late or absent from rehearsal. They know that they will probably be displaced if they are not there and on time. In the amateur production, the threat of dismissal does not hang over the heads of the cast if they're not at every rehearsal; but everyone will aim to be present and on time, because common courtesy tells him that he should be. To keep a friend waiting on a date is inconsiderate enough, but to delay a whole group of people would be to show extreme rudeness. If your absence from rehearsal is unavoidable, ask someone to carry the message—someone who is sure to be going and who will not fail to tell the director in charge.

If work is over at 5 o'clock and a rehearsal is called for 5:30, it is understood that the cast will be satisfied with a drug-store snack before beginning. When the rehearsal is

over, the crowd can have fun together going out for a more leisurely meal.

**Costume committee.** Costumes should be hired from a supply company that guarantees their being cleaned after every wearing. There has been much criticism from employees who were expected to wear clothes that had not been freshened after a previous wearing.

Two girls and two men who are members of the costume committee arrive early on the night of the show. They will be needed in the dressing rooms to help members of the cast to dress and to put on make-up.

If everybody is to be on the stage at one time, as in a minstrel show or a concert by a glee club, the four assistants will find it boring to sit in the dressing rooms for two hours or more, to guard the things that have been left there. Before the group starts to go out on the stage, one of the committee members should make an announcement somewhat as follows: "As soon as you have all left, we are going to lock the doors to the dressing rooms. We'll be in the wings watching the show, but we'll have the keys with us. We're saying this so that no one will worry about clothes and handbags when they see us there." It has given many an employee an uncomfortable evening, while bound to remain on the stage, wondering whether anyone would be watching over his possessions.

If one of the doors has to be unlocked for any reason during the performance, two men or two girls should go together. People who participate in shows will tell you that at least one handbag is always mislaid. Until it is found, unnecessary discomfiture will be avoided if no one has entered a dressing room alone during the evening.

**Ushers.** The ushers are generally girls, with one girl appointed by the general chairman to head the group. In a firm

largely composed of men, some of the daughters and younger wives may be asked to serve as ushers.

A week or two before the show, the ushers have an informal meeting to discuss what they will wear. If costumes are decided on, and the budget allows it, the girls will be measured by their chairman. It will then be left to her to hire their outfits from the same agency that is furnishing the costumes for the performance, so that they will harmonize. Flowers are not worn with costumes, but the chairman will see that flowers are provided if the vote is for evening gowns or dressy informals, instead of uniform costumes.

### OUTING

Just the word "outing" brings to mind at least one such occasion in your experience. Perhaps it was a picnic; or it may have been a boat trip, a clambake, a trip to a park or to someone's camp, with supper outdoors. The informality made it all seem simple. Why, there would be nothing to it if the firm should have an outing—just sandwiches and orangeade and hot dogs (everybody expects hot dogs). Ah, but that means building a fire, and finding out places where you would be allowed to build one—oh, yes, and arranging for transportation, and figuring how much food to order for 300 people, and making sure that the ice cream won't melt, and having some games, and deciding on the date. Before you know it, you have quite a list.

Those who have had experience find that, after all, the only satisfactory way to hold an outing is to have committees and make careful preparations in advance. When you're 15 miles out of the city, it's no time to remember about the bread.

In most cases an outing is provided free by a firm. Each employee is allowed to take a guest—sometimes, the whole



family. Occasionally the employees pay the bills. In an effort to keep down expenses, a committee will sometimes consider requesting everyone to bring a box lunch, with soft drinks and ice cream as the only items of food to be furnished. This arrangement does not work out particularly well. As long as the employees are standing the whole expense, they would rather pay a nominal fee and have everything included. It costs something to pack a lunch at home, and the time that is spent in preparing it is not always easy for working people to spare.

Depending on the amount of money allotted, your plans may range all the way from a simple picnic, with the food served cafeteria style at long tables, to a full day of varied entertainment.

One firm charters a boat every summer from a commercial line and gives its 500 employees and their families a wonderful day on the water. There's all the food that you'd want, an orchestra, a playroom with hired nurses in charge, deck games, and plenty of well-padded deck chairs.

The employees in another firm are treated every year to an outing on a similarly generous scale. It is held at a country inn, where both the house and its extensive grounds are taken over. The afternoon is like a three-ring circus, with so much going on that you don't know whether to settle for the tennis matches or the baseball game or the string of hilarious races. While the prizes are being given out, word is passed around that tea and cold drinks are ready on the veranda. At dinner time, a delicious meal is served. The president makes one of the briefest speeches on record. A headliner from a local theater puts over his act. And dancing tops the evening.

**Choosing the day.** A week day is the best choice. There's something about getting time off from work that puts everyone in good spirits. Saturday and Sunday are second choice,

and for other reasons: There will be twice as many absent, owing to vacations, with those just leaving and those returning. Also, much as a person would like to go, he may at the same time look forward to spending week ends at home, relaxing with his family.

Those who have had experience in planning outings prefer a day early in the week. Then, if it should rain on the appointed day, they can telephone the firms from which they are buying the food and ask them to hold things in the refrigerators another day or two.

As for choosing a holiday, it depends on your locality. In some places this might be the hardest day to get everybody together, while elsewhere the chance to go away would be most welcome.

One firm holds a big celebration every Fourth of July. The employees live in a town that offers little diversion, so the owner invites them all to come with their families. They ride in buses to a beach lively with amusements. It is about 30 miles away—too far to be visited often—so this alone makes it a treat. Lunch is served in picnic style on the sand, and then the afternoon is given over to a choice of entertainment.

There are free rides on everything, lockers are provided for those who want to go in swimming, and the dance hall is hired. The public is not admitted, and the band is the same hot one that plays at night.

To close the day, a fish dinner is served at one of the best restaurants on the boardwalk.

**Transportation committee.** It is usual to send out a bulletin asking how many employees can take their cars and how many passengers each can accommodate. It has never proved to be safe to depend on people just because you know that they drive to work every day. For instance, two men may have sedans. One will unhesitatingly tell you, "The car will hold

six comfortably, and eight if people don't mind squeezing in." The other will make no reply to your bulletin. When you see him in the corridor and ask him, he will hedge before finally answering, "Well, I suppose I can take one in the front seat—if she's good-looking—but I just put new slip covers on the back of my car." You are polite enough to make no comment.

When there is not enough room in the cars for all, one or more buses can be chartered. People cannot be expected to get much enjoyment out of going separately by streetcar, and only youngsters enjoy riding in trucks.

For transporting food and equipment, on the other hand, a truck will be of great help, and the management sometimes has one of its own to lend. This will be far easier than trying to cram a little of this and a little of that into private cars, which are likely to be well filled already with people. Simply because the truck is available, however, do not yield to the temptation to pack it to the doors. Half the things taken on an outing are never used. You can go to all the bother of renting and transporting and unstacking a pile of folding chairs, only to see them pushed aside while people sit on the ground.

**Sports committee.** For managing games at an evening affair indoors, a certain amount of restraint among the participants makes it advisable to hire a professional leader. But at an outing the employees can manage things much better by themselves. Even though the group may number thousands, experience has not shown it preferable to have outside direction for the activities.

The sports committee usually has three members. One of them will plan the various sports and contests and write out the rules governing them. In doing so, he will make them as simple as possible, so that people who never saw a three-

legged race before will not hesitate to enter. The more events, the better: this will provide a longer show, and more employees will be encouraged to take part.

The second member will secure the prizes, whether they be purchased or donated, will see that they are transported safely to the grounds, and will keep them from harm until they have been won.

The third member will be the starter. (Volunteers from the crowd are asked, on the spur of the moment, to act as judges.) Part of his work will be to encourage the timid ones on the side lines to take part in events, even picking out different people and jollying them to enter the simpler contests. A program can be carried through with great success when it is led by someone in the firm who is known for being friendly and witty, and possessing some ability to manage.

**Food committee.** Whether the menu is simple or lavish, the quality of food should be the very best. A host would be considered indescribably cheap to invite guests and serve them an inferior meal. So would a firm. Besides the unpleasantness of having to eat food that is not altogether palatable, there is the danger of becoming ill.

Cost is not the only determining factor. Some high-priced items can be ruined by poor cooking. An outdoor fireplace is a great temptation to the amateur cook, but it will be better for all concerned if his services are used elsewhere. If he's the boss, try to get him interested in setting up sawhorses and cutting cake.

At one picnic the steaks may have been all right to begin with. However, there wasn't much to recommend them after they had been so carelessly held over the fire that one side was raw and the other burned. Hamburger or even the best quality would have cost less, and how good it could be—

shaped into generous patties, cooked till brown and juicy, and then tucked between slices of fresh, buttered bread.

The food committee is held responsible for tidying up. Preserve a good reputation for your firm by the way that you leave things. Everything that can be destroyed should be burned or put into public waste barrels. Don't hesitate to call out several times, "Everybody please see that no food or paper is left around." There shouldn't be so much as a gum wrapper to be seen, while only the most unthinking would leave a fire before it had died down and could be carefully stamped out.

**Entertainment committee.** Like the preparations for food, the entertainment need not be elaborate. A portable radio or phonograph may be taken along. Someone in the company may be able to play the harmonica or the accordion. A little persuasion, a little instrumental accompaniment, and the crowd will be harmonizing, "Down by the Old Mill Stream."



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